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INTERIOR MOTIVE



Outgoing U.S. Interior secretary defends legacy as he leaves

In this May 9, 2017, file photo, then Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke rides a horse in the new Bears Ears National Monument near Blanding, Utah.

Associated Press

By **MATTHEW BROWN**
Associated Press
BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — As former U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke exits Washington chased by ethics investigations and criticism of his actions favoring industry, he told The Associ-

ated Press he's lived up to the conservation ideals of Teddy Roosevelt and insisted the myriad allegations against him will be proven untrue. The former Montana congressman also said he quit President Donald Trump's

cabinet on his own terms, despite indications he was pressured by the White House to resign effective Wednesday. During almost two years overseeing an agency responsible for managing 500 million acres of public

lands, Zinke's broad roll-backs of restrictions on oil and gas drilling were cheered by industry. But they brought a scathing backlash from environmental groups and Democratic lawmakers who accused him of putting corporate

profits ahead of preservation. In his first interview since stepping down, Zinke said the changes he instituted meshed with Roosevelt's belief in balance between nature and industry.

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Powell says he would reject any Trump request to resign

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell said Friday that he will not resign if asked to do so by President Donald Trump, and that he is prepared to be patient in deciding when to raise interest rates again.

Both of those messages cheered stock market investors who had been worried about Trump's repeated attacks on his hand-picked choice to lead the nation's central bank and also the Fed's seemingly inexorable march to higher rates.

"There is no pre-set path for policy," Powell said during an appearance at a conference of economists in Atlanta. "With the muted inflation readings we have seen coming in, we will be patient as we watch to see how the economy evolves."

Private economists viewed Powell's comments as a strong signal that the Fed, which in December had projected another two rate hikes in 2019, may end up deciding to pause hikes for



Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell speaks at a conference, Friday, Jan. 4, 2019, in Atlanta. Associated Press

several months. "With Chairman Powell's remarks today, I would say

they will do just one hike or maybe no hikes this year," said Sung Won Sohn, chief economist at SS Economics. "Powell is definitely trying to calm the markets." Wall Street, which opened sharply higher after a report showing 312,000 jobs gained in December, surged even higher during Powell's appearance. The Dow Jones industrial average finished the day up 746 points or 3.3 percent. Powell called the jobs report "very strong" and said he was also encouraged by the rise in the labor force participation rate and gains in wages, which he said "for me at this time does not raise concerns about too high inflation." Trump has complained that the Fed has pushed rates higher despite the fact that there is no evidence that inflation was getting out of control.

The president's attacks had become so intense that they had raised concerns that he might be considering firing Powell, a development which could send the market into a tailspin. Trump would appear to

be on shaky legal ground if he tried to fire Powell. Under the law that governs the Federal Reserve, a president can only remove a Fed chairman for cause. Courts in cases that involved other agencies have interpreted that language to not cover policy differences.

Asked if he would resign if Trump asked him to do so, Powell responded with a short "no."

Powell's willingness to be flexible on interest rates was welcome news to investors, many of whom worried that Fed chair risked cutting off the current economic expansion by continuing to raise interest rates despite signs the U.S. economy was cooling off a little.

On Friday, Powell said, "We are always prepared to shift the stance of policy and to shift it significantly if necessary" to meet the goals of maximum employment and stable prices.

Powell gave as an example the fact that in 2016, when Janet Yellen was Fed chair, the central bank began the year with a projection that it would raise rates four

times that year but ended up raising rates only once because the economy hit a soft patch.

Appearing on a panel with his two predecessors — Yellen and Ben Bernanke — Powell also said that the Fed could alter its approach to trimming its huge balance sheet if it determines such a change is needed.

The pace of Fed rate hikes and the lowering of the balance sheet, which tends to put upward pressure on interest rates, had both been concerns of investors in recent months.

The stock market has seen stomach-churning declines since October, a development that Trump has blamed on the Fed's continued rate hikes, although the president's trade dispute with China as well as concerns about global economic growth also played a part in the market volatility.

The Fed had increased the size of its balance sheet four-fold to a record \$4.5 trillion in an effort to push long-term interest rates lower. But it has been gradually reversing that stance over the past year, although the balance sheet still remains above \$4 trillion. But some investors have worried that that process could push long-term rates higher at a time when the economy was slowing.

Powell on Friday stressed that the Fed was prepared to adjust the pace at which it trimmed the balance sheet if necessary to support economic growth.

While Trump has sent out a number of tweets criticizing Powell and calling the Fed the biggest threat to the economy, Powell said that he had not received any direct pressure from the White House. Asked if he had had any face-to-face meetings with Trump, Powell said he had not although he said previous Fed leaders have had discussions from time to time with previous presidents.

Asked if any future meeting with Trump was scheduled, Powell said, "I have no news on that. Nothing is scheduled." □

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Continued from Front

He added that they were needed in part to unfetter energy companies bound by unreasonable drilling curbs, largely imposed under former President Barack Obama.

"Teddy Roosevelt said conservation is as much development as it is preservation," Zinke said, reference a 1910 speech by the Republican president. "Our work returned the American conservation ethic to best science, best practices ... rather than an elitist view of non-management that lets nature take its course."

House Democrats plan to put Zinke's almost two-year tenure under the spotlight with oversight hearings beginning next month, said Adam Sarvana, a spokesman for Rep. Raul Grijalva of Arizona, the Democrat in line to lead the House Natural Resources Committee. The hearings initially will focus on policy changes such as "giveaways" to the oil and gas industry under the leadership of Zinke, Sarvana said. He added they later could be expanded to include the various ethics investigations pending against Zinke, a former Navy SEAL and avowed Trump loyalist.

The investigations have ranged from a probe into a land deal involving Zinke and the chairman of energy services giant Halliburton, to questions about his decision to reject a casino in Connecticut sought by two tribes.

During his interview with the AP, Zinke denied a Washington Post report that Interior Department investigators believe he may have lied to them, which has reportedly prompted an examination of potential criminal violations by the U.S. Justice Department's public integrity section. Several other investigations into Zinke concluded with no findings of wrongdoing. In one case he was faulted by investigators for violating a department policy by allowing his wife to ride in government vehicles with him. That report also said the Interior Department spent more than \$25,000 to provide security for the

couple during a vacation to Turkey and Greece.

For the energy industry, Zinke brought relief from rules imposed under Obama that were meant to limit drilling in sensitive wildlife habitat, curb emissions of the greenhouse gas carbon monoxide and protect water supplies.

Despite the Democrats' newfound power in Washington after taking control of the House of Representatives, industry representatives said Zinke's impact will be lasting. That's because they involved agency regulations rather than congressional action and came at the order of Trump, said Dan Naatz, vice president of government relations for the Independent Petroleum Association of America.

"Although Secretary Zinke was effective at what he was doing, the policy really came from the president," Naatz said. "We don't expect any major changes." Until Trump nominates and the Senate confirms a permanent replacement, Zinke's shoes will be filled on an acting basis by his deputy, David Bernhardt, a former lobbyist for the oil and gas industry. Left-leaning groups that campaigned against Zinke already have turned their attention to Bernhardt with claims that his prior work leaves him compromised.

"David Bernhardt is too conflicted to serve him in any position, whether it's deputy, acting or full Interior secretary," said Aaron Weiss with the Center for Western Priorities. Weiss also suggested the pending investigations against Zinke are likely to continue and said the former secretary "can't make his trouble go away by simply walking away."

In his resignation letter, Zinke said he was compelled to stop down because the political attacks against him had created a distraction from Trump's drive to boost U.S. energy production.

He told the AP that the allegations fit into a "playbook" used by the administration's critics to stifle Trump's energy agenda, smear Zinke's name and undercut any



In this Thursday, Aug. 16, 2018 file photo, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, right, accompanied by Education Secretary Betsy DeVos, left, and Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar, center, speaks during a cabinet meeting in the Cabinet Room of the White House, in Washington.

Associated Press

future bid he might make for public office. He said he won't run for Montana governor in 2020, but did not rule out a future run.

In the weeks leading up to his resignation, the White House concluded Zinke was likely the Cabinet member most vulnerable to investigations led by newly empowered Democrats in Congress, according to an administration official not authorized to publicly discuss personnel matters

who spoke on condition of anonymity.

In Zinke's telling of events, Trump remained fully supportive to the end and it was the secretary himself who made the decision to go. His departure comes amid a partial government shutdown in which Zinke ordered many national parks to stay open, saying visitors shouldn't be penalized for the political feud centered on Trump's proposed border wall with Mexico.

With reports of overflowing trash bins spurring calls for the parks to be closed until the shutdown ends, Zinke offered some parting advice as he prepared to head back to his hometown of Whitefish, Montana, just outside Glacier National Park: "I would encourage everyone that visits their parks to help pitch in, grab a trash bag and take some trash out with you," he said. "Pack it in, pack it out." □

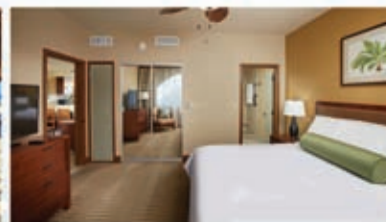
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President Donald Trump speaks in the Rose Garden of the White House in Washington, after a meeting with Congressional leaders on border security, as the government shutdown continues Friday, Jan. 4, 2019, as Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen, Vice President Mike Pence, House Minority Whip Steve Scalise of La., and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy of Calif., listen.

Associated Press

White House exploring ways to stop raises during shutdown

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House said Friday it is exploring ways to prevent a pay raise for top administration officials during a government shutdown that has left hundreds of thousands of federal workers without pay. White House Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said in a statement that the administration "is aware of the issue" and "exploring options to prevent this from being implemented while some federal workers are furloughed." The raises are the result of a pay freeze for top federal officials, including the vice president and cabinet

secretaries, that has been passed repeatedly by Congress but is now on the verge of expiring because of the shutdown. Trump told reporters at a press conference earlier Friday that he "might consider" asking cabinet secretaries and other top officials to forgo the raises. Vice President Mike Pence committed to doing so. The raises, which were first reported by The Washington Post, appear to be an unintended consequence of a shutdown that is affecting hundreds of thousands of federal employees, forcing many to work without pay. □



In this Thursday, Jan. 3, 2019 photo, then Rep.-elect Rashida Tlaib of Michigan, is shown on the house floor before being sworn into the 116th Congress at the U.S. Capitol in Washington.

Associated Press

Welcome to the jungle: New Dems get early political lesson

By LAURIE KELLMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The education of the star-studded class of House freshmen has begun. Lesson one: Speaking with the bluntness of a candidate can produce swift and uncomfortable results. Rep. Rashida Tlaib learned that before lunch Friday, when her profane remarks the night before vowing to impeach President Donald Trump drew almost no support, and plenty of pushback, from members of her party. "It's been pretty intense," Tlaib, D-Mich., told The Associated Press in a brief hallway interview Friday as she reported to the House to face her colleagues. Hours after Tlaib was sworn in as part of the history-making class of freshmen that helped flip the House to Democratic control, she ran afoul of the widespread sense among her colleagues that they should focus for now on health care and other policies rather than impeachment — at least until special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation concludes. "We're gonna impeach the motherf---er," Tlaib ex-

claimed during a party Thursday night hosted by the liberal activist group MoveOn, according to video and comments on Twitter. It was a striking coda to the Democrats' heady ascendance to the House majority Thursday, sparking unusually public corrections from House veterans. "I disagree with what she said," said House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., during a CNN interview. His committee would be the one to begin impeachment proceedings. "It is too early to talk about that intelligently," Nadler said. "We have to follow the facts." Newcomers routinely stumble as they learn how things are done on Capitol Hill. But Tlaib and her classmates have been celebrated in magazine profiles for their independence and their promises to stand up to the powers that be. By rebuking one, the more seasoned Democrats were effectively warning the others. "I think some of our new members probably don't realize that you are always on, that when you are

a member of Congress, there's always someone listening," said Rep. Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill. She said she hopes Tlaib's remarks aren't news for long. More than Tlaib's profanity, it was her vow to impeach Trump that drew her colleagues' disapproval. Tlaib's defiance flew in the face of Speaker Nancy Pelosi's warning to focus on policies the candidates had promised ahead of the Nov. 6 elections. The timing also chafed, just hours before congressional leaders were headed to the White House to try to resolve the standoff over the border wall Trump is demanding in exchange for reopening the government. Republicans pounced, using the occasion to question the Democrats' true priorities and Pelosi's leadership. With a tight smile, Pelosi rejected Tlaib's profanity and her impeachment vow. "That is not the position of the House Democratic caucus," Pelosi said on MSNBC of Tlaib's comments. "I don't think we should make a big deal of it." Rep. Gerry Connolly, D-Va., served up a reminder to the new members that seniority rules in Congress. □

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Ex-New Jersey gov to states: Fight U.S. control of sports bets

By WAYNE PARRY

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Former New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie wants lawmakers across the country to resist a bill that would give the federal government control over regulating sports betting.

The Republican said Friday at a conference of legislators that states have proven they can handle the job. Christie began a court battle against the major pro and college sports leagues that ended with the U.S. Supreme Court clearing the way for all states to choose whether or not to offer sports gambling.

Speaking Friday in New Orleans at the National Council of Legislators from Gaming States conference, Christie also urged lawmakers to resist granting the leagues "integrity fees," which are essentially a slice of the action on sports bets, and said they should refuse demands to use official league data in sports betting.

To do so would be to "reward bad behavior" by the leagues, Christie said, referring to their lengthy opposition of New Jersey's court case seeking the right to offer legal sports betting.

Seven states currently offer sports gambling, and those who track the industry expect a total of 30 states to consider legislation to permit it this year.

"We do not need a federal solution to this problem," Christie said. "States have been regulating gambling for decades without incident."

He referred to a bill introduced last month by Democratic U.S. Sen Charles Schumer of New York and retiring Republican Sen. Orrin Hatch of Utah that would give the federal government control of regulating sports betting as "a solution in search of a problem." That bill would have the U.S. Justice Department set minimum standards for states to offer sports betting. It does not explicitly provide the sports leagues the cut of gambling reve-

nue they have been seeking, so-called "integrity fees," but does not prohibit them, either.

"We're going to reward the people who fought us for seven years with fees that are going to diminish your margins?" Christie asked the lawmakers. "They don't need it, and given their conduct over the last seven years, they don't deserve it."

The leagues support federal regulation of sports betting, saying it would be more efficient to have one set of rules than 50 individual ones.

Dan Spillane, Senior Vice President of the National Basketball Association, said part of the sports betting industry is built on the league's costly product: basketball games.

"We bear the brunt of the risk if things go sideways," he said. "I know there are some bad feelings in some quarters about the litigation."

Regarding integrity fees, Spillane said, "We don't think this is an unreasonable ask, or something that's going to cripple the industry." Spokesmen for the professional football, baseball, and hockey leagues did not immediately respond to requests for comment following Christie's speech. In interviews with The Associated Press before Christie spoke, lawmakers from Ohio, Iowa, and Indiana all opposed federal regulation of sports betting, saying they are better suited to regulate it in their own backyards.

"We know what we have in our states and what we can do," said Ohio Republican state Sen. William Coley II, chairman of the state legislators' group. "Legislators in Utah know what people in Utah want, lawmakers in New Jersey know what works best for them. We don't want federal oversight."

"Sports betting is new and we need to evaluate it and make the right adjustments. We already regulate all types of industries

state by state," Democratic Indiana state Rep. Justin Moed said. "Multinational corporations adjust to state regulation, and so can the sports leagues."

One Republican state senator from Louisiana who supported federal regulation changed his mind after hearing Christie's speech.

"I can see a tremendous money grab from the feds on this," said Sen. Ronnie Johns.

Christie said the sports leagues need to change their approach toward gambling.

"The leagues should understand this better than anybody: When you lose, you lose," he said. "That 'L' is up there on the board." □



In this Nov. 29, 2017, file photo, New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie speaks during a news conference in Newark, N.J.

Associated Press

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AP-NORC Poll: Immigration among the top concerns in 2019

By **NICHOLAS RICCARDI**
and **HANNAH FINGERHUT**
Associated Press

As much of the U.S. government remains shut down over President Donald Trump's insistence on funding for his border wall, nearly half of Americans identify immigration as a top issue for the government to work on this year.

An Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll conducted shortly before the shutdown began finds that both Republicans and Democrats are far more likely to include immigration in their list of top issues facing the country this year compared with a year ago.

Overall, 49 percent mentioned immigration in an open-ended question as one of the top five problems they hoped the government addresses in 2019. By contrast, 27 percent mentioned immigration in December 2017.

Partisan divides on the best solutions remain deep. Republicans continue to be more likely to cite immigration as a top issue than Democrats, an indication of the GOP's greater intensity on the issue. But it's an increasingly important issue to members of both parties. The poll found that 65 percent of Republicans say immigration is one of the top five problems facing the country, up from 42 percent in 2017. Among Democrats, 37 percent cite immigration as a top issue, compared with just 2 in 10 a year ago.

Roughly two-thirds of those who named immigration as a top priority express little confidence in the government to make progress this year, including a third who say they are "not at all" confident. About a third say they are at least moderately confident in the government to make progress on immigration. This follows a year of intermittent deadlocked negotiations and standoffs between Trump and Democrats in Congress.

Although both Democrats and Republicans are increasingly likely to name

immigration-related issues as top priorities for the government, other polls show that their opinions on the

direction and Trump's performance.

"People are busy," Hoyt said. "I can tell the econ-

unchanged from one year ago. A traditionally Democratic issue, health care is named by Democrats

when government couldn't get in the way," he said.

With Democrats assuming control of the House of Representatives, the inevitable gridlock could preserve the economic expansion, Parks argued.

Republicans are more likely than Democrats to be optimistic, but feelings about the country are mixed even within the GOP. Six in 10 Americans are dissatisfied with the way things are going in the country as a whole, including 79 percent of Democrats and 42 percent of Republicans. Among Republicans, that's a slight increase from 33 percent who were dissatisfied with the state of the country in October. Still, Republicans are far more likely than Democrats today to say they're satisfied with the way things are going in the country, 39 percent to 9 percent.

The unhappiness on both sides of the aisle is palpable to John Rossetti, a 47-year-old code enforcement officer in Youngstown, Ohio.

"There's a really different, negative environment," Rossetti said. "Everywhere you go, it's there — just a very negative atmosphere."

Rossetti describes himself as a moderate to conservative Democrat who didn't support Trump in 2016 but was rooting for him to succeed. Now he's disillusioned and pessimistic about the future, and he's not alone. Americans are more likely to think things in the country will get worse in the next year than that they will get better, 42 percent to 32 percent.

More Americans do think 2019 will be a better year for them personally than think it will get worse, 37 percent to 18 percent, but another 45 percent say there won't be much difference.

Rossetti has only had two small raises in the past 12 years he's worked for Youngstown, yet his health insurance premiums keep rising.

"I don't think I'm doing better," Rossetti said. "I feel like I'm doing what I need to do to stay afloat." □



In this Jan. 2, 2019, photo, a border patrol office inside his vehicle guards the border fence at the U.S. side of San Diego, Calif., as seen from Tijuana, Mexico.

Associated Press

issue diverge dramatically. For example, a December poll by CNN found that 78 percent of Republicans and just 8 percent of Democrats supported building a border wall.

And with their party still in control of the White House and the Senate, Republicans are more optimistic about the government making progress on immigration this year. Among those who prioritize immigration, Republicans are more than three times as likely as Democrats to express some confidence that the government will make progress. That includes David Hoyt, a 77-year-old retired school superintendent and registered Republican in eastern Iowa.

"We waste too many resources with illegal aliens," Hoyt said. "If people want to come here, let's have them do it legally. I don't understand why people don't understand the word 'illegal.'"

Hoyt says he's also focused on the economy, and its healthy state is why he's satisfied with the country's

omy from the number of semis on the highway, and it's loaded."

Chris Butino, 31, is a Democrat and a firefighter in Cortland, New York, who's been disappointed by Trump's rhetoric and actions on immigration, especially against refugees. Trump has sharply curtailed the number of refugees accepted by the U.S. and taken steps to limit who can claim asylum as more migrants from Central America try to do so at the Mexican border.

"We're America — we're the wealthiest nation in the world in terms of resources, and saying we're not going to take in the poor, huddled masses," Butino said. "We can maintain our own safety, but we can also be generous."

The economy remains a top priority for Americans, with 62 percent citing related issues, including mentions of jobs, unemployment, taxes and trade.

Nearly half of Americans also identify health care as one of the top five issues facing the country,

more than Republicans (56 percent versus 43 percent). There was a sharp rise in environmental and climate issues after a year of wildfires and hurricanes, a change that is largely driven by Democrats. Overall, about a quarter of Americans mention the environment as a top issue. About 4 in 10 Democrats include the environment as a priority, compared with just 8 percent of Republicans. The share of Democrats naming the environment has grown 11 percentage points since a year ago.

The poll was conducted in December before the stock market gyrations and government shutdown. Gil Parks, a retired CPA who's become a rancher in Texas, is fine with the shutdown.

"It's only 25 percent of the government," he said.

Parks, a 59-year-old Republican, is optimistic the country could be in for a long stretch of economic growth, in part because of the partisan acrimony fueling the shutdown.

"If you look back in history, the economy did best

Navy SEAL pleads not guilty to killing captured ISIS teen

By JULIE WATSON

SAN DIEGO (AP) — A decorated Navy SEAL pleaded not guilty Friday to charges of premeditated murder and other crimes in the stabbing death of a teenage Islamic State prisoner in Iraq last year and the shooting of unarmed Iraqi civilians.

Special Operations Chief Edward Gallagher will stand trial between Feb. 19 and March 1 before a jury that will be one-third enlisted personnel. Gallagher has been jailed since his arrest on Sept. 11, and a judge said he will determine next week whether the 19-year Navy veteran should be released before the trial.

The case stands out because of the seriousness of the allegations against an elite special warfare operator and because prosecutors' case includes the accounts of fellow Navy SEALs, an extremely tight-knit group even by military standards.

At Friday's arraignment, prosecutors handed over 1,700 pages of documents, including text messages they say show Gallagher trying to intimidate witnesses.

His attorney, Phil Stackhouse, dismissed them as "hearsay and double hearsay statements." Stackhouse said his client is being falsely accused by disgruntled SEALs who wanted to get rid of a demanding platoon leader.

Navy prosecutors have painted a picture of a highly trained fighter and medic going off the rails on his eighth deployment, indiscriminately shooting at Iraqi civilians and stabbing to death a captured Islamic State fighter estimated to be 15 years old, then posing with his corpse at his re-enlistment ceremony.

If convicted, Gallagher, who was awarded the Bronze Star twice, faces life in prison.

At a two-day preliminary hearing at the Navy base in November, investigators



This 2018 photo provided by Andrea Gallagher shows her husband, Navy SEAL Edward Gallagher.

Associated Press

said Gallagher stabbed the teen in the neck and body with a knife after he was handed over to the SEALs in the Iraqi city of Mosul to be treated for wounds sustained by the Iraqi Army and its prisoners during an airstrike in May 2017.

Naval Criminal Investigative Service Special Agent Joe Warpinski told the court that a SEAL medic told him he believed he had just stabilized the teen when Gallagher "walked up without saying anything at all" and started stabbing him.

Afterward, prosecutors say he took photos of himself with the corpse, holding up his knife in one hand and propping up the body by holding the head with his other hand. He also posed with the body during his re-enlistment ceremony captured in the footage, Warpinski said.

Warpinski said that when another SEAL questioned Gallagher, he replied, "I was working on him, and he just died." Gallagher's attorney also indicated to the court that the teen

died from injuries from the airstrike.

Warpinski, who spoke to nine members of SEAL Team 7, said he was told Gallagher would fire into crowds of Iraqis. He is accused of shooting an elderly man carting a water jug in Mosul in June 2017 and a girl walking along a riverbank in the same area a month later.

Investigators told the court that Gallagher had threatened to publicly name fellow SEALs if they reported his actions.

Warpinski said some SEALs were so concerned that they did not tell him his sniper rifle settings were off so his shooting would be less accurate and they would fire warning shots to clear away civilians.

There has been speculation that the case may widen to implicate others for not reporting what they witnessed.

Prosecutors have already accused Gallagher's platoon commander, Navy Lt. Jacob Portier, of not acting on the allegations. □

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Baby sitter accused of killing boy and giving body to mother

WAUSAU, Wis. (AP) — A Wisconsin baby sitter who allegedly killed a 2-month-old boy then pretended he was alive when she gave the boy back to his mother has been charged with first-degree intentional homicide.

A criminal complaint filed Friday says 28-year-old Marissa Tietsort of Wausau caused the infant's death in October, then put him in a snowsuit and car seat and returned him to his mother — without telling her the child was dead.

Authorities found the mother trying to revive the boy, but he had died hours earlier of blunt force head injuries from multiple impacts to the head.

During a court appearance Friday, Judge Jill Falstad issued a \$500,000 cash bond for Tietsort and ordered that she have no contact with children or with the victim's family, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported.

Tietsort, who is pregnant with her sixth child, also faces child abuse charges involving an 11-month-old girl in her care. That charge stems from an August incident. Tietsort was arrested in that case after the 2-month-old died in October.

A message left with the



This undated booking photo released by Marathon County Sheriff's Office shows Marissa Tietsort of Wausau, Wis.

Associated Press

public defender's office hasn't been returned.

According to the criminal complaint, the mother of the 2-month-old boy dropped him and his older brother off at Tietsort's home on Oct. 18.

About two hours later, the baby's mother received a text from Tietsort, in which Tietsort told her that a local news website published a story saying she'd been charged with child abuse and she isn't supposed to have contact with children. Tietsort told the mother not to tell anyone she was watching her two sons. When the victim's mother came to pick up her sons later, the infant was in his car seat with a hat pulled down over his eyes. □

With Brexit 12 weeks away, uncertainty squeezing UK economy

By PAN PYLAS
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — With Britain just 12 weeks away from the day it is meant to leave the European Union, one thing is becoming clear — uncertainty over what Brexit will mean is hurting the economy.

A raft of economic figures released Friday showed the British economy weakening at the turn of the year just as Prime Minister Theresa May delayed a parliamentary vote on the Brexit deal she agreed on with the EU. House prices are down and business optimism in the key services sector is at its second-weakest level since the global financial crisis a decade ago.

One of Britain's leading mortgage providers said house prices fell in December by their biggest amount in six and a half years. The Nationwide Building Society said that house prices, a barometer of the health



Estate Agent boards stand outside properties in London, Friday, Jan. 4, 2019.

Associated Press

of the wider economy, fell by a monthly rate of 0.7 percent, the biggest monthly decline since July 2012. On an annual basis, prices were up only 0.5 percent, the lowest since February 2013.

"It is likely that the recent slowdown is attributable

to the impact of the uncertain economic outlook on buyer sentiment, given that it has occurred against a backdrop of solid employment growth, stronger wage growth and continued low borrowing costs," said Robert Gardner, Nationwide's chief economist.

The big uncertainty surrounding the British economy relates to Brexit, which is officially due to take place on March 29. May delayed the vote on her deal to the middle of this month after realizing she was heading for a big defeat. As things stand, it looks like her deal,

which foresees relatively close ties between Britain and the EU in the trade of goods, will struggle to win enough support.

What would happen then is unclear. Some lawmakers back another Brexit referendum while others think the country would be fine crashing out of the EU after some initial turbulence. Given the uncertain outcome of the vote in Parliament, both the EU and Britain are preparing for a possible "no-deal" Brexit. The British government, for example, is stockpiling pharmaceuticals and has bought a number of super-sized fridges to keep them viable.

The Bank of England, which warned in November that a "no-deal" Brexit could see the British economy contract by a whopping 8 percent within a few months, also published figures showing a further slowdown at the end of 2018. □

Despite pressure, Romanian president won't fire prosecutor

By ALISON MUTLER
Associated Press

BUCHAREST, Romania (AP) — Romania's president on Friday refused a request from the justice minister to dismiss the county's top prosecutor, who has clashed with the government over its commitment to fight corruption.

President Klaus Iohannis said he wouldn't fire Prosecutor General Augustin Lazar, a critic of a governmental judicial overhaul that he and others say will make it harder to prosecute senior officials for corruption.

Justice Minister Tudorel Toader asked Iohannis to remove Lazar from his post last month based on a 63-page report that alleged mismanagement. But Iohannis said Lazar was "doing a very good job" and rejected "this so-called evaluation," which he said doesn't adhere to legal principles.

The president also refused to appoint two other ministers.



In this Saturday, Dec. 29, 2018, photo a man walks by the monument of the European Union Founding Fathers in Bucharest, Romania.

Associated Press

His refusal drew a sharp rebuke from the ruling Social Democratic Party, which accused Iohannis of blocking government activity and "influence peddling." The party claimed the president was in cahoots with Lazar, who was a regional prosecutor in an office that in 2010 dropped charges

against Iohannis in a fraudulent property restitution case. Iohannis was mayor of the Transylvanian city of Sibiu at the time, before being elected president in 2014.

The ruling party said it would "use all legal and constitutional means... to defend the constitutional

order and the rule of law and assure a minimum political stability," during the six months it holds the European Union's rotating presidency, which began Jan. 1. Iohannis on Friday also rejected Toader's repeated request to appoint regional prosecutor Adina Florea to the post of chief prosecutor

at the National Anti-Corruption Directorate. Iohannis said it was "rather odd" that Tudorel would resubmit her name after Iohannis said last month she was not legally qualified for the position.

The Superior Council of Magistrates also ruled Florea was unsuited for the high-profile position because it said she handled stress badly and had problems with "honesty and impartiality."

The European Union says it's concerned about corruption and the erosion of the rule of law in Romania.

But the government claims the EU is discriminating against Romania, and insists prosecutors have too much power. It says the country should be free to decide upon its own laws. Last year, Tudorel engineered the dismissal of the former chief anti-corruption prosecutor Laura Codruta Kovesi, alleging that she mismanaged the office and overstepped her authority. □

German politicians' data posted online, govt probes source

BERLIN (AP) — Personal data and documents on hundreds of German politicians and others have been posted online, and German cyber-defense experts were trying to figure out Friday how the information was obtained.

The data breach hit politicians at all levels, including the European, German and state parliaments as well as municipal officials, said Martina Fietz, a spokeswoman for Chancellor Angela Merkel.

"The German government takes this incident very seriously," she said Friday, adding that the country's cyber-defense center was investigating the breach.

Interior Minister Horst Seehofer said an initial analysis suggests that the material was obtained from cloud services, email accounts or social networks. He said there was no indication that federal government or parliament computer systems were compromised. Fietz told reporters that "it



In this picture taken Nov. 21, 2018 German Chancellor Angela Merkel (CDU) speaks in the Bundestag.

Associated Press

appears, at first sight, that no sensitive information and data are included in what was published, including regarding the chancellor."

Public broadcaster RBB,

which first reported on the issue Friday morning, said there appeared to be no method to what was posted via a Twitter account.

Although the data reportedly include information

such as cellphone numbers, addresses, internal party communications and in some cases personal bills and credit card details — some of the data years old — RBB said there appeared

to be no politically sensitive documents.

The German news agency dpa reported that the information included a fax number and email address belonging to Merkel and several letters to and from the chancellor.

The Twitter account in question, which was still online early Friday with about 17,000 followers but was later suspended, had been active since mid-2017.

The links it posted suggested that information on politicians from all parties in parliament except the far-right Alternative for Germany had been shared in daily batches before Christmas along with data on YouTubers and some other public figures. The last post was on Dec. 28.

The head of Germany's IT security agency, Arne Schoenbohm, said authorities had been aware of individual cases in December but material was posted online on a large scale Thursday evening. □

UN to send new envoy to Somalia after flap led to expulsion

By JENNIFER PELTZ
Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The United Nations plans to replace an envoy who was expelled from Somalia after questioning the arrest of a political candidate with an extremist history, the world body said Friday.

The announcement came after three days of diplomatic back-and-forth over Somalia's expulsion of Nicholas Haysom, a longtime U.N. official who has also served as envoy to Afghanistan and South Sudan.

U.N. spokesman Farhan Haq said Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has full confidence in Haysom, deeply regrets Somalia's decision and spoke twice about it with Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed. The world body also argues that its personnel can't be kicked out under the diplomatic doctrine that Somalia invoked.

Nevertheless, the secretary-general plans to ap-

point a new representative for Somalia, Haq said.

"It's crucial that the U.N. mission on the ground is able to go about its work," he explained. That work includes electoral support and other functions.

Somalia's U.N. mission didn't immediately respond to an inquiry about the developments.

The Horn of Africa nation announced Tuesday it was ordering Haysom to leave, saying he overreached and meddled in the country's internal matters.

In a letter to Somali officials, Haysom had raised concerns about the legal basis for the arrest of Mukhtar Robow, a former deputy leader of the deadly al-Shabab Islamic extremist group who defected and then ran for a regional presidency.

Robow was a leading candidate, and the election was days away, when he was arrested last month. Somali officials said he



In this Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2015, file photo, Nicholas Haysom, then the top UN envoy in Afghanistan, speaks during a press conference in Kabul.

Associated Press

hadn't completed a defection process and had failed to renounce extremist ideology, among other allegations against him.

Deadly protests followed his arrest.

Haysom didn't immediately respond to an inquiry Friday, and he didn't directly address his ouster while briefing the U.N. Security Council Thursday on overall developments in Somalia.

He did, however, say that

the violent fallout from Robow's arrest "does not bode well" for upcoming elections and that Robow's case could discourage other extremist group defectors from abandoning violence to pursue political change.

Meanwhile, Somali Ambassador Abukar Dahir Osman admonished the council that the U.N. and its representatives have "an obligation to respect their man-

date and to not interfere in our internal affairs."

Somalia appreciates the U.N.'s help but "distinguishes between the institutions that we are part of and individuals' conduct that has a detrimental effect on our fragile nation," he said.

After three decades of civil war, extremist attacks and famine, Somalia established a functioning transitional government in 2012 and has since been working to rebuild stability.

Other countries have, at times, booted U.N. officials. Guatemala, for instance, announced in 2017 it was expelling the head of a U.N.-sponsored commission investigating alleged corruption in the Central American country.

After leaving for a work trip to the United States, he hasn't been allowed to return to Guatemala.

Guterres has rejected Guatemala's request to name a new chief for the commission. □

Fragmentation helps Netanyahu re-election hopes

JERUSALEM (AP) — Barring a devastating legal ruling against him in a series of corruption allegations, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu looks to be cruising toward re-election and a historic fifth term in office after the upcoming April 9 vote.

Part of his longevity is due to Israel's splintered electoral system, which allows him to rule with just a quarter of the vote for his ruling Likud Party. The first week of the election campaign has already seen a dizzying series of maneuvers, with old parties splitting and new ones emerging, most seeming to work in Netanyahu's favor. Here's a look at how the Israeli election works and the factors that decide how its government is formed.

THE SYSTEM

Israeli democracy operates on a parliamentary system in which the government needs a majority to rule. Since no party has ever earned more than 61 of the 120 seats in the Israeli Knesset, a coalition is required. For Israel's first three decades, the founding socialist Labor Party ruled easily by adding a small party or two to its governments, with the hawkish Likud and its predecessor typically serving as the main opposition party.

Since Likud first rose to power in 1977, it has built coalitions with other right-wing parties or formed a so-called unity government with Labor.

Israel briefly experimented with direct elections for prime minister in the 1990s but quickly reverted back to voting for parties, rather than individuals.

After an election, Israel's



In this Dec. 23, 2018 file photo, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu chairs the weekly cabinet meeting in Jerusalem.

Associated Press

president chooses the party leader he decides has the best chance of building a coalition. This job has become more complicated as smaller personality-driven parties gain ground. Recent coalitions have included numerous mid-sized parties, often at odds with each other. Power struggles continue long after the election.

THE BLOCS

In the absence of large parties, focus has shifted toward unofficial blocs of political parties with similar ideologies and interests.

Though most polls indicate Likud winning roughly 30 seats, it can usually build a majority with traditional nationalist and ultra-Orthodox allies.

The center-left bloc, traditionally in favor of negotiating a statehood deal with the Palestinians, has

lost support. It has not been able to muster a majority. Parties representing Israel's Arab minority have not been asked to join coalitions.

This arithmetic allowed Netanyahu to rise to power in 2009, even when his party finished second.

"Netanyahu is a bloc player, not an individual player. All he cares about is getting 61," said political commentator Amit Segal.

Several centrist parties with more ambiguous platforms have muddled the math in recent years, with the potential to swing either right or left. But the various combinations have yet to produce a "blocking majority" to Likud.

The anti-Netanyahu forces in Israel have been yearning for years to unite into a single list that can give him a good fight. But so far there has been more

splitting than uniting. Of the current 10 factions in Parliament, three have already fractured. Two former military chiefs have announced the formation of new parties as well.

There is a distinct possibility that as many as 15 parties will get in next time, tying an all-time high.

ELECTORAL THRESHOLD

A party has to garner at least 3.25 percent of the vote to get into parliament. Niche and single-issue parties often fail to break in, and their votes are lost.

Therefore, this week's news that a pair of nationalist Cabinet ministers, Naftali Bennett and Ayelet Shaked, bolted their pro-settler Jewish Home party to form a new right-wing party could be bad news for Netanyahu. Without them, Jewish Home is in danger of falling short of the threshold. It is

reportedly in talks to link up with other borderline factions on the right.

CURRENT PLAYERS

Regardless of the fragmentation on the right, Netanyahu remains its only viable candidate for prime minister. But on the center-left, several consider themselves worthy challengers and are busy competing with each other.

The freshest face is retired Lt. Gen. Benny Gantz, a former military chief who just entered the race and has been polling a distant second to Netanyahu. The fact that he is the public's most popular alternative even before saying a word about his worldview speaks to the Israeli voters' yearning for new options.

Gantz is merely the latest would-be savior. In 2013, former TV anchor Yair Lapid formed the centrist Yesh Atid party which became Israel's second-largest faction. In 2015, Moshe Kahlon's economy-focused Kulanu became the unlikely kingmaker.

Lagging far behind is Labor, which has sunk to its lowest point in history, polling in single figures. It has been mired in internal conflicts that came to a head this week when its leader, Avi Gabbay, dramatically dissolved his union with former Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni on live TV. She is now looking for a new home.

Moshe Yaalon, a former defense minister and military chief, has also started a new party, as has Orly Levi-Abukis, the daughter of former Likud stalwart David Levy, whose economic platform looks to appeal to some left-leaning working-class voters. □

Police: Several killed in Baghdad women's shelter fire

BAGHDAD (AP) — A fire at a women's shelter in Baghdad killed several lodgers on Friday, according to police, who gave conflicting accounts of the tragedy. Baghdad Police Lt. Col. Mohammed Jihad, briefing reporters outside the shelter,

called it a "group suicide" caused by women rioting in the shelter. He said several women were suffering from a "deteriorating mental state" and rioted, resulting in the fire that killed six women.

But another officer at

the Rusafa police district, where the shelter is located, said the fire started in the kitchen after lodgers got into a fight. The officer, who asked that his name be withheld in line with police regulations, said two women died from stab

wounds and seven perished in the fire.

At two nearby hospitals 22 others were being treated for injuries.

The casualty toll could not be independently confirmed. Police barred reporters from entering the

shelter, located in Baghdad's northern Azamiyah area.

The shelter, run by the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry's Office for Rehabilitation, houses homeless women and those with children born out of wedlock. □



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A look at high-profile defections from North Korea

By KIM TONG-HYUNG
Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea's top diplomat to Italy, who South Korea's spy agency says has gone into hiding along with his wife, appears to be the latest member of the North's elite to abandon the secretive totalitarian state.

Many of them have expressed frustration over what they described as an oppressive police state in Pyongyang or desires for their families to have new lives in South Korea or the West.

The North, which touts itself as a socialist paradise, is extremely sensitive about defections, especially among its elite, and has previously insisted that they are South Korean or U.S. plots to undermine its government. South Korea has accused the North of killing or attempting to assassinate past defectors.



This Feb. 16, 1996, file photo, shows Lee Han-young, a nephew of one of the former wives of Kim Jong Il, in Seoul, South Korea. Associated Press

A look at some of the high-profile defections from North Korea:

'JUCHE' ARCHITECT

The late Hwang Jang Yop

remains as the highest-ranking North Korean official to defect from the North and seek asylum in South Korea.

Hwang, a former senior

member of North Korea's ruling Workers' Party, was the chief architect of the North's governing "juche" ideology of self-reliance and had tutored former North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, the late father of current ruler Kim Jong Un. Hwang was still one of the country's most powerful officials when he fled during a visit to Beijing. After resettling in South Korea in 1997, Hwang became a vocal critic of the North Korean leadership he had a hand in building, which led to threats and attempts on his life Seoul blamed on Pyongyang.

Hwang, then 87, died in 2010 after suffering a heart attack, months after two North Korean army majors were sentenced to prison in South Korea for plotting to assassinate him.

ROYAL FAMILY MEMBER

South Korea blamed the

1997 death of Lee Han-young, a nephew of one of the former wives of Kim Jong Il, on North Korean agents sent on a revenge mission. But police failed to catch the assailants before they allegedly returned to the North. Lee had defected through Switzerland in 1982, but Seoul kept his arrival secret until 1996, when his mother also fled the North. He was a harsh critic of Pyongyang's government and his dictator uncle. Lee died of gunshot wounds after being attacked in front of his apartment near Seoul in February 1997. According to his neighbors, Lee after the shooting said, "spy, spy," and held up two fingers, perhaps indicating the number of attackers. Police said a woman purporting to be a magazine reporter called the apartment to ask when Lee would be home before the attack. □

Japan's premier: New emperor's era to be announced April 1

By YURI KAGEYAMA
Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's prime minister confirmed in his New Year's news conference that the era name for the new emperor's reign will be disclosed April 1.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Friday that 2019 will mark pivotal times for Japan, repeatedly referring to Emperor Akihito's stepping down.

Akihito has chosen to buck tradition and abdicate while he is alive, citing frail health. His son becomes emperor May 1.

Era names are important as they are needed to determine what year it is in the traditional Japanese calendar.

The great public atten-

tion the rituals surrounding the new emperor's arrival have drawn highlights how steeped in tradition Japan remains, despite modernization.

Akihito's waving earlier this week from the palace balcony drew a crowd of more than 150,000 people, a record for Akihito.

Abe stressed that 2019 will be a historic year for Japan, noting the Year of the Boar in the Asian zodiac heralds a year of determination.

"We hope to mark a strong start for the era," he told reporters, standing before a golden screen next to a curvaceous bonsai pine tree. "We will show speed and flexibility like a boar."

The era under Akihito is called Heisei, which trans-



Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe delivers his speech during New Year's press conference in Ise, central Japan, Friday, Jan. 4, 2019.

Associated Press

lates to "achieving peace." Abe said the details of how the new name will be announced are still being worked out.

Hesei started Jan. 8, 1989,

the day after Emperor Hirohito died. Akihito is the first living emperor to give up the throne in two centuries. The New Year's news conference is a customary

event for prime ministers after they pay a visit to Ise Shrine in central Japan.

The shrine, which bills itself as "the soul of Japan," is dedicated to Amaterasu Omikami, the sun goddess of the Shinto religion. More than 1,500 rituals are carried out there each year to pray for the imperial family, as well as for world peace and a plentiful harvest.

Abe also expressed hopes for better relations with North Korea, extolled free trade and reiterated the importance of Japan's alliance with the U.S.

"Japan will hold up high the flag of free trade," he said. He also said Japan will show leadership at the Group of 20 summit that it's hosting for the first time this year. □

Foreign diplomats urge Venezuela's Maduro to hand over power

By FRANKLIN BRICENO
SCOTT SMITH

Associated Press

LIMA, Peru (AP) — Diplomats from a dozen Latin American countries and Canada on Friday urged President Nicolas Maduro to abstain from being sworn in for a second term and cede power until new elections can be held, saying it is the only way to restore democracy in Venezuela. The strong rebuke from the Lima Group urging Maduro to hand over power to the opposition-controlled National Assembly comes days before his Jan. 10 inauguration to a six-year term widely rejected as illegitimate.

Even before announcing its decision, the gathering in Peru's capital prompted a sharp response from Venezuela's Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza, who said the coalition is taking orders directly from U.S. President Donald Trump, which Caracas frequently accuses of spearheading an economic war against the country.

"What a display of humiliating subordination!" Arreaza said on Twitter.



Chile's Foreign Minister Roberto Ampuero, center, attends a meeting of the Lima Group concerning Venezuela in Lima, Peru, Friday, Jan. 4, 2019.

Associated Press

A once-wealthy oil nation, Venezuela is in crisis after two decades of socialist rule, marked by hyperinflation that makes it difficult for people to afford scarce food and medicine. An estimated 2.3 million Venezuelans have migrated from their country since 2015, according to the United Nations.

The Lima Group formed more than a year ago to

advocate for a solution to Venezuela's crisis that threatens regional instability.

Immediately following Maduro's May 20 re-election, the coalition said it refused to recognize the results, decrying the vote as failing to meet "international standards of a democratic, free, just and transparent process."

Argentina, Brazil, Colombia

and Mexico are among the group's members. Peruvian Foreign Minister Nestor Popolizio recently had said his country would propose that Lima Group members break diplomatic relations with Venezuela.

However, the political make-up of the coalition has recently shifted, most notably in Mexico.

The newly elected government of Mexican President

Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador is a member of the coalition but abstained from the vote.

His administration has adopted a policy of non-intervention, and Maduro traveled to Obrador's inauguration, meeting privately with the new Mexican leader.

The United States is not formally a member of the Lima Group, but U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo participated in the meeting via video conference.

It follows Pompeo's recent visit to Latin America during which he attended the inauguration of Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro and then stopped in Colombia to meet with President Ivan Duque. Both Bolsonaro and Duque signaled a united stance against Maduro's government aligned with the United States.

The Trump administration considers Maduro's government a "dictatorship," sanctioning roughly 70 top officials and blocking U.S. banks from doing business with Venezuela, putting a financial stranglehold on the cash-strapped country. □

Brazil's Bolsonaro sees threat in Russia, considers US base

By MAURICIO SAVARESE
PETER PRENGAMAN

Associated Press

SAO PAULO (AP) — Brazil is open to hosting a U.S. military base to counter Russian influence in the region, the South American country's new far-right president said.

Jair Bolsonaro, who took office on Tuesday, is a fan of U.S. President Donald Trump and a fierce critic of Venezuela's socialist President Nicolas Maduro.

In the interview to the SBT network Thursday night, Bolsonaro said he is worried about Russia's closeness with Venezuela. In December, the two countries held a joint training mission in Venezuela that was criticized by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

"My approximation with the United States is economic,



Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro holds a ceremony to present his cabinet members at the presidential palace in Brasilia, Brazil, Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2019.

Associated Press

but it could also be war-like," said Bolsonaro, adding the base would be "symbolic" since American military power can reach any part of the globe.

"Depending on what might happen in the world, who knows if we might have to

talk about it (a U.S. base) in the future," the former Brazilian army captain said.

On Friday, asked by journalists in Brasilia, Bolsonaro repeated that America is a friend to the U.S.

The possibility of a U.S. base in Brazil was not openly dis-

cussed during Pompeo's recent visit to Brasilia. Bolsonaro did not clarify where in Brazil he would like to see an American base.

American and Brazilian military forces collaborated between 1941 and 1945, a partnership that included an air base near Natal.

Then U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt called Natal — the closest point in the Americas to Africa — the "Trampoline to Victory" during World War II because it kept allied troops in Africa supplied. During part of the war, the Brazilian coastal town had one of the busiest airports in the world. Since then, Brazil's top leaders, including the generals during Brazil's 1964-1985 dictatorship, have frowned on the idea of having American bases in the South American country.

Former Brazilian national security secretary Jose Vicente da Silva believes such a base could be advantageous.

"We have a long cooperation, especially with the DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration). The Americans have concerns in the Amazon because of drug trafficking. Brazil has American technology to monitor borders and could obtain new technologies," Da Silva told The Associated Press.

In Thursday's TV interview Bolsonaro praised Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his Hungarian colleague Viktor Orban. Both attended his inauguration in Brazil's capital.

Bolsonaro reiterated his decision to move Brazil's embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, but did not offer a timeline. □

LOCAL



Lights are ON for Carnival!

The streets of Oranjestad are going to be filled with lights tonight. The official opening of the carnival season takes off with the Torch Parade. Twelve carnival groups participate, each with their own theme in outfit. The Torch Parade is an easy going parade where the costumes are mostly decorated T-shirts in certain colors. But.... This is just a warming up for the most colorful, creative, inspiring parades that are to come. The route of this parade is in Oranjestad: Starts at Aruba Entertainment Center in Dakota - Vondellaan - L.G. Smith Boulevard - ex-DOW building - Wendy's.

The island is known for its white-sanded beaches and perfect climate, but there is one time in the year that Aruba draws thousands of visitors: carnival. If you have never been here before, come in carnival season as your experience will be amazing. Sensational musical events, queen elections and different parades are all part of this spectacular phenomenon. Carnival is part of Aruba's history and cultural heritage, actually it is the largest cultural festival on the island. For the islanders it is a way to express their creativity and break away from the daily buzz of life. Dancing to the rhythm of local music while enjoying the ambiance of the public are some of the ingredients of this festival. Oranjestad and San Nicolas are the stages for this display of unique designed costumes, amazing ambience and upbeat, local music. The festival is for everybody accessible and safe to visit. Behind the screens there is an enormous organization that makes sure that this festival runs smoothly. The police, inspection department, Red Cross volunteers, garbage service and many others work day and night to make sure that carnival is a success. All the trailers are being carefully inspected before they are allowed to participate as well as the vehicles that pull them. After each parade the streets are being cleaned and road blocks are being taken away so next day normal traffic flow occurs. The several organizations and institutions work together with the official carnival organization SMAC.

History

In the 1920's the first carnival events were organized by social clubs that started private costume and masquerade parties. This year we celebrate Aruba's 65th carnival, which means that the first grand parade took place in 1955. Since then Aruba's carnival has grown big and is now able to stand shoulder to shoulder with the most renowned Carnival celebrations around the world.

Aruba Today has put the coming carnival events for you in a row:



- Jan 5 Torch Parade
- Jan 12 Election Prins & Pancho
- Jan 19 Children & Youth Queen Election
- Jan 24 Aruba Carnival Queen & Mrs Carnaval
- Jan 26 Tumberito Festival
- Jan 27 Balloon Parade Children San Nicolaas
- Feb 1 Sunset Parade
- Feb 2 Grand Tumba Contest
- Feb 3 Children & Youth Calypso & Roadmarch contest
- Feb 4, 5, 6, 7, Pre-Final Caiso & Soca Monarch
- Feb 9 Children Parade Bubali
- Feb 9 Grand Final Caiso & Soca Monarch
- Feb 15 Crazy Hour Jump Up
- Feb 17 Transfer and Command 10 am
- Feb 17 Grand Children Parade Oranjestad starts at 12:00 noon
- Feb 23 Jouvert Morning San Nicolaas starts at 03:00 am
- Feb 23 Aruba Grand Lighting Parade
- Feb 24 Grand Children Parade San Nicolaas starts at 1:00 pm
- Feb 24 Burning of Momito San Nicolaas
- Feb 28 Lightning Parade San Nicolaas
- Mrt 2 San Nicolaas Grand Parade starts at 11:00 am
- Mrt 3 Aruba's 65th Grand Carnival Parade Oranjestad starts at 11:00 am & Burning of King Momo 8:00 pm Harbour Arena.
- Mrt 6 Ash Wednesday



For more information you can visit Facebook page SMAC, the official carnival organization. □

It's A Wrap



#AskPilar

ORANJESTAD — Aruba Today recently launched its very first video of the series 'Ask Pilar' at Facebook Aruba Today and on our website www.arubatoday.com. Let us introduce to you this fresh new project and the people behind it.

Why a video? Besides our daily printed free newspaper, our posts on Facebook and Instagram and our website content we started evaluating the plans for short video's about a year ago. The concept was created by Editor-in-Chief Linda Reijnders to add variation to the product Aruba Today. "There is more to this island than palm trees and beaches and in

our videos we wish to inform and educate the visitor by showing local places of any kind.

We are all new to this, but goal is not to deliver a technical perfect result, moreover motivate with the content and topic as well as the good energy coming from it." Aruba Today will publish two or more videos per week and the concept will be interactive.

Meaning that as the title of the video 'Ask Pilar' already reveals, the viewer has the tool to actually ask about the topics shown or maybe even suggest a location/topic for a video.

Just ask our host Pilar through Facebook comments or messenger.

THE TEAM

Pilar Flores, 33 years old, is the jolly Video Host of 'Ask Pilar'. She loves doing the videos because she gets to meet a lot of nice people and to know many interesting places. "I hope with it that people will get to know and love Aruba the way us locals do." Flores is Executive Editor at Bon Dia Newspaper, Aruba Today's sister, where she is fond of being up to date on all current happenings and events and having the inside information. She has a Bachelor of Theology, achieved in Aberdeen, Scotland and a Masters of Applied Ethics in Utrecht, The Netherlands.

"In my leisure time I like to walk in Arikok National park, play with my three cats, color and spend time with my boyfriend."

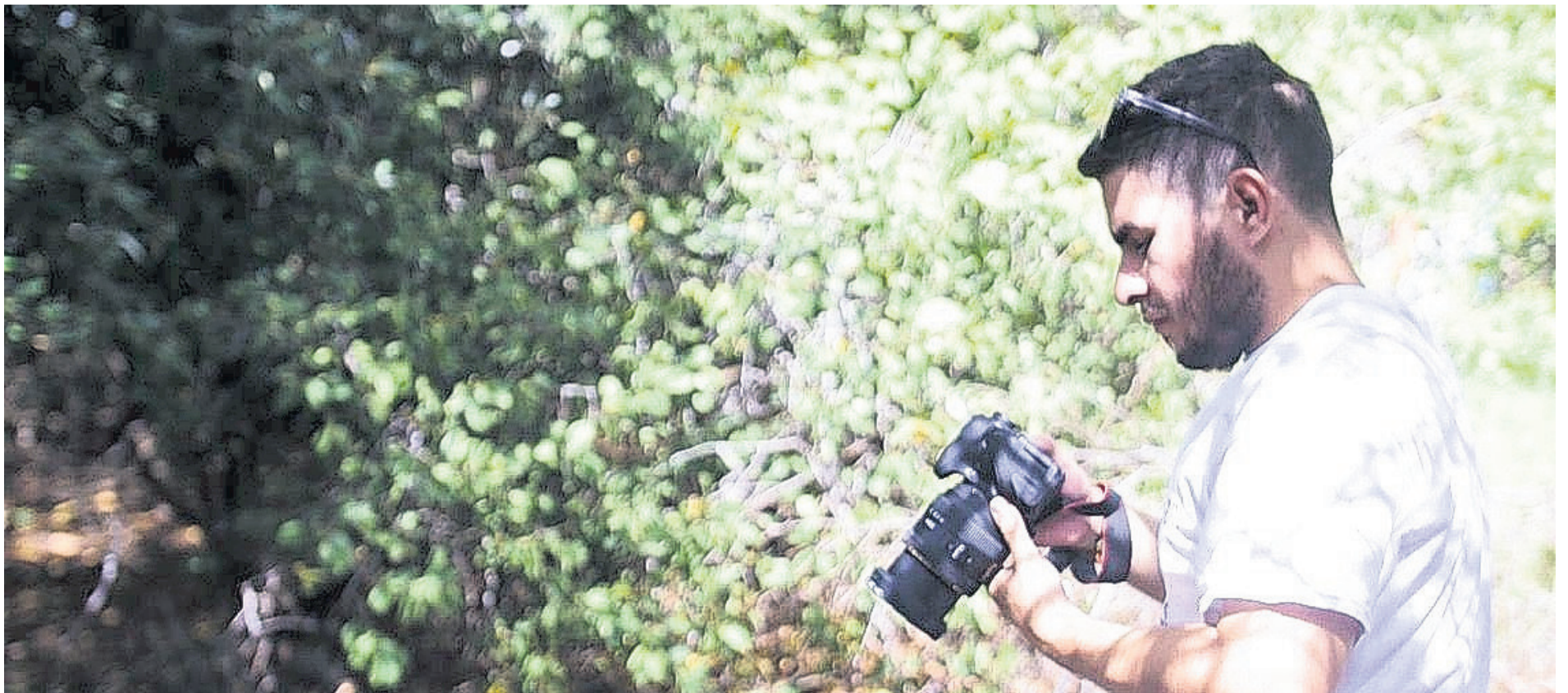
The one capturing the images with his camera and edit them into the end result is our Videographer Juan Luis Pinto Sotter, Marketing Major at the University of Aruba. "I chose marketing because I wanted a career that kept me physically and mentally active. As a junior marketer there is a lot of moving around, I can't begin to imagine

what the real world will be like." His hobbies include photography, gaming, and working on his car. "I am not a car mechanic, however YouTube helps a lot and I find it very therapeutic to put everything aside and work on this piece of metal that helps me move long distances." Juan Luis loves to capture moments with his camera and edit them into a dynamic video.

Video Director of 'Ask Pilar' is Editor-in-Chief Linda Reijnders, working in this current position since July 2017 and before that for six years with the local newspaper in Dutch, Amigoe di Aruba as a journalist and Editor-in-Chief of the magazine H&H.

"I love working in the media, I love to write, create, connect, inform and educate. Working with young, talented and motivated people like Juan Luis and Pilar is a blessing to me. We really enjoy making these Aruba Peeks and we for sure hope that rubs off to the viewer."

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Aruba to Me

ORANJESTAD – We would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island. Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory.

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Last but not least: check out our website and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today's newspaper we received a great picture from Patrick Heffron. He wrote: Aruba to me is... fun, adventure and relaxation all in one package! I came to Aruba for the first time 18 months ago, and I have now been multiple times. I can't get enough of it. The people are friendly, the restaurants are some of the best I have been to in the world - and with great service. The bars have great staff. The beaches are awesome and have lots of water activities. It is a safe island and the water is good to drink out of every tap on the island! And even though it is a pretty small island, it always amazes me the great little hidden places that you can find when you explore - like this one in this photo! ☐



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Fruit Loose & Veggie Boost



Fresh fruits make a tropical holiday's picture complete. Whether you see the mango's hanging in the trees or the fresh fruit cocktail on the side table of your pool bed, the link is there: you are in the tropics. Aruba grows her own fruits and veggies and there are some pretty out-of-space local species you may never had heard of, but really healthy and delicious.

Kenepa

Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa strengthens the immune system,

and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

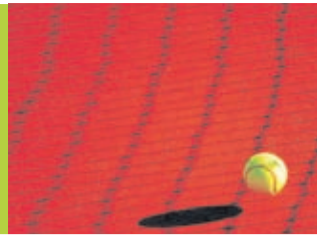
Konkomber chiquito

This is a sort of local squash, but looks like a cucumber with prickly skin. The taste however is bitterer than the cucumber and the vegetable is smaller in size but bigger

in width. Inside is a soft, fleshy pulp and seeds, just like the cucumber. Konkomber chiquito is grown in the island and used in salads and 'stoba' (stew) or on its own in vinegar. The veggie contains multiple B vitamins, including vitamin B1, vitamin B5, and vitamin B7 (biotin). B vitamins are known to help ease feelings of anxiety and buffer some of the damaging effects of stress. Additionally this veggie is rich in two of the most basic elements needed for healthy digestion: water and fiber. Season: year-round. □



SPORTS



ROCKET FUEL



Harden rallies Houston to wild OT win

Houston Rockets' James Harden reacts during the second half of the team's NBA basketball game against the Golden State Warriors Thursday, Jan. 3, 2019, in Oakland, Calif.



In this Jan. 3, 2019 photo, former Minnesota Vikings football player Jared Allen practices with his curling team for a competition in Blaine, Minn. Associated Press

Ex-NFL Pro Bowl players try curling with 2022 Olympic goal

By JIMMY GOLEN
AP Sports Writer

Defensive lineman Jared Allen retired from the NFL in 2015 and wasn't ready to give up on the competition he'd come to enjoy as a five-time All-Pro. His solution: The Olympics. The problem: He didn't compete in any Olympic sports.

Less than a year later, Allen and three other former NFL stars — none with any prior experience — are attempting to qualify for the U.S. national curling championships against players who have been throwing stones for most of their lives. It would be the first step toward competing in the 2022 Winter Games in Beijing.

"Every team in the NFL — whether you're hot garbage or the defending Super Bowl champions — every coach come August says the same thing: 'We're trying to win the Super Bowl,'" Allen said. "We come from that mentality, where we set lofty goals.

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Tway returns to Kapalua as a tour winner and leads with 66

By DOUG FERGUSON

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP) —

Kevin Tway first played Kapalua as a 15-year-old a week before his father competed in the Sentry Tournament of Champions for the first time, an experience memorable for Bob Tway getting stung by a centipede and having to only watch. Tway is a lot older, much taller and a lot better now. The Safeway Open champion made his debut in winners-only field Thursday with a 7-under 66 on the Plantation course to build a one-shot lead over Dustin Johnson, Justin Thomas and Gary Woodland.

The first round of the new year delivered a little bit of everything.

Bryson DeChambeau illustrated the new Rules of Golf by leaving the pin in the hole, including his 15-foot par putt on the 17th. Patton Kizzire made the first hole-in-one of the year with a 7-iron on the par-3 eighth. Kevin Na was the first player to withdraw in 2019, ending his week in paradise because of an injury to his pinky finger. Cameron Champion hit one of two drives that went 400 yards on a course that yielded 175 shots of 300 yards or more.

Not so new? Johnson in the hunt again.

Johnson, the defending champion and two-time winner at Kapalua, has never shot over par in 32 rounds since coming here for the first time 10 years ago. He showed his experience on the par-5 18th, when he missed the green



Kevin Tway plays his shot from the second tee during the first round of the Tournament of Champions golf event, Thursday, Jan. 3, 2019, at Kapalua Plantation Course in Kapalua, Hawaii.

Associated Press

to the right and faced an extremely fast putt with the grain and wind. Instead, he used a wedge to get some spin and remove some of the break in the putt, and it left him a short birdie putt for a 67.

"First round of the year, I'm pretty pleased with it," Johnson said.

Rory McIlroy birdied three of his last four holes for a 69 in his first competitive round on the Plantation course.

"I think anything in the 60s today was a good start," he said.

Brooks Koepka would have taken that. Instead, the PGA Tour player of the year had five bogeys and a double bogey on his way to a 76, two shots better than his start last year when he had a wrist injury that wound up

keeping him out of golf for four months.

Tway, the 30-year-old son of the former PGA champion, is among nine newcomers to Kapalua in the 34-man field. He hit his tee shot on the par-3 second hole to 2 feet, followed that with a wedge to 10 feet for birdie on the next hole and really never came close to a bogey.

His only trouble was the day before, when an ear and sinus infection caused him to withdraw after five holes of the pro-am because of dizziness that made him feel "like I was walking on a water bed."

There were no issues on Thursday. The Oklahoma State alum has seen this tournament only on TV, though he still had good

memories of that week with his father in 2004. It wasn't much fun for his dad.

"On one hole, Dad took a huge divot and a centipede had come up from the ground," Tway said. "And he went to flick it away and it stung him, and his finger swelled up to the size of a golf club grip, so he couldn't play that entire week. He just watched me play the course."

Tway went back to school in Edmond, Oklahoma, and his dad recovered in time to play the tournament.

He was 5-foot-7 and barely 120 pounds back then. Now at 6-foot-3, the same frame as his father, Tway is hopeful that is good start might allow him to become only the fourth player to win Kapalua in his debut since

the Tournament of Champions moved here in 1999. The others were David Duval, Sergio Garcia and most recently Daniel Chopra in 2008.

But it's very early, and there's some prominent names right behind him.

Johnson and Thomas are the last two winners at Kapalua. Both dropped a shot on the par-4 sixth, and both made plenty of birdies to atone for it. Woodland had eight birdies to account for a few of his mistakes.

Marc Leishman was at 68 after being hopeful of sharing the lead. Coming off a birdie on the 16th, Leishman shoved his drive so far right on the 17th that it ran into the bushes. He tried to whack it out and reached only the rough and wound up with a double bogey.

DeChambeau had said he would take advantage of the new rule that allows the pin to be left in for putts on the green. He didn't do on every hole, but he gave scientific thought to when he did.

"I feel like I maximized my potential on that," DeChambeau said, and he pointed to the 16th as an example.

"It's kind of blowing downwind, 5 percent slope, straight down hill, you want that pin to help," he said. "So that's what I did and utilized it to my advantage. So I felt like for the most part I needed the pin to be in and it went in and it was a very nice help."

He shot a 69, but that there was even better evidence in his corner. He led the field in putting on Thursday. □

AP All-Pro team has Kansas City accent: Mahomes, 3 teammates

By BARRY WILNER

AP Pro Football Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — From a breakthrough quarterback to a unanimous choice. From two brothers to four rookies for the first time — two from the same club, no less. The Associated Press 2018 All-Pro Team has something for everyone.

Patrick Mahomes and three other Kansas City Chiefs players made the squad Friday.

They were joined by the first rookie teammates since 1965 — Colts guard left Quenton Nelson and linebacker Darius Leonard. The last time that occurred it was two future Hall of Famers, the Bears' Dick Butkus and Gale Sayers.

Rams defensive tackle Aaron Donald was the only unanimous choice in balloting by a nationwide panel of 50 media members who regularly cover the league. "That's surreal," Donald said. "It's a blessing. Wow! You see the hard work pay off. "A lot of credit to my teammates and my coaches for pushing me and helping me."

Mahomes, Kansas City's second-year sensation, drew 45 votes at quarterback and was joined by teammates Travis Kelce at tight end, Tyreek Hill as the flex player and Mitchell Schwartz at right tackle. Kelce's brother, Eagles center Jason, also made the team.

"For me and my brother to both get it, it's that much more special because I still remember us in the backyard fighting with each other, playing football growing up and we envisioned each other competing at the highest level, compet-

ing against the best players," Jason said. "And for both of us to be recognized as one of those guys is pretty special."

Joining Nelson and Leonard as rookies on the team were Seahawks punter Michael Dickson and Chargers safety Derwin James.

"These are the kind of guys who have the DNA, the makeup of everything that we are looking for," Colts coach Frank Reich said of Nelson and Leonard. "All the intangibles, all the character qualities, everything about them. It's a really hard filter to get through to get marked that way and both Quenton and Darius had that on their card. So that says something about their maturity and how fast we think they will develop." And already have developed.

Chicago also had four All-Pros: edge rusher Khalil Mack, cornerback Kyle Fuller, safety Eddie Jackson and punt returner Tarik Cohen.

Two players made All-Pro for the fifth time: Houston edge rusher J.J. Watt and Carolina linebacker Luke Kuechly.

"It means a lot to get back to the top level of the game," said Watt, who missed most of the 2016 and '17 seasons with major injuries. "Obviously, it's an extreme honor to be a first-team All-Pro, especially after what I've been through the last two years and hearing the things that people were saying and questioning myself at times. "To be able to get back to the top level of the game and know that I still have things to improve on and things that I want to get

even better at, it's exciting." The All-Pro team was split: 14 AFC and 14 NFC members. There were 16 newcomers: Mahomes; Schwartz; Fuller; Jackson; Cohen; Saints receiver Michael Thomas; Packers left tackle David Bakhtiari; Eagles interior defensive lineman Fletcher Cox; Patriots cornerback Stephon Gilmore; Chargers defensive back Desmond King and special teamer Adrian Phillips; Jets kick returner Andre Roberts; and the four rookies.

Players with previous All-Pro honors who made the 2018 team included Donald and Seahawks linebacker Bobby Wagner, each for the fourth time; Mack, Dallas right guard Zack Martin and Ravens kicker Justin Tucker, each for the third time; Hill; Rams running back Todd Gurley; and Texans receiver DeAndre Hopkins.

"I think I really took a lot of pride in leadership," said Wagner, who drew 49 votes. "I knew that was going to be big if we were going to be successful. I knew I was going to have to up my role in that, up my mindfulness in that. I was really conscious of that and just making sure I was, when it came to getting back to the defense I looked at it from a different lens."

Hopkins got the most votes on offense with 46.

"This is validation," Hopkins said. "I feel like these people are the people who actually know football, who study football, who have been around football for years. So to be on this list and to be first team is a great feeling. But it makes me want to work harder and continue to be on that list." □



In this Dec. 30, 2018, file photo, Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes (15) throws a touchdown pass to wide receiver Demarcus Robinson, unseen, during the second half of an NFL football game against the Oakland Raiders, in Kansas City, Mo. Associated Press

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Harden rallies Rockets in OT to edge Warriors 135-134

By JANIE McCAULEY

AP Sports Writer

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — A defender on either side of him, James Harden let it fly one last time for an improbable game-winner in the waning seconds of overtime before falling backward and hitting the floor. It took his second triple-double of the week, fifth straight 40-point performance and sheer will to rally the Houston Rockets past the Golden State Warriors 135-134 in a thriller between Western Conference powers Thursday night for their sixth straight victory.

Harden hit a contested 3-pointer with 2.7 seconds left in OT and finished with 44 points, 15 assists and 10 rebounds. The reigning MVP's team had trailed by 20.

"I take my shots, I drive to the basket," Harden said. "I shoot my step-backs with confidence and live with the results."

Kevin Durant's long 3-pointer missed as the buzzer sounded in what will go down as one of the best games this regular season



Houston Rockets' James Harden, right, is defended by Golden State Warriors' Stephen Curry (30) during the first half of an NBA basketball game Thursday, Jan. 3, 2019, in Oakland, Calif.

Associated Press

— a rematch of the seven-game Western Conference

finals won by two-time defending champion Golden State.

Stephen Curry put the Warriors ahead with 23.1 seconds remaining in OT on the way to 35 points, a basket that shouldn't have counted because Durant was clearly out of bounds when he flung the ball back in. Durant said he knew it, too, and "I could believe it because the refs were missing a lot tonight."

Harden, however, had one more incredible, acrobatic moment still in him. He released the ball swarmed by two defenders — Klay Thompson to his left and Draymond Green in front of him.

Harden also hit 3-pointers at the 3:52 and 2:02 marks of OT in a game featuring dazzling displays on both ends by some of the game's biggest stars.

"I don't know where it ranks but I'm just happy to come away with the win," Harden said. "I just had to go out and do my part on the highest level."

Thompson made a go-ahead layup with 40.6 seconds left in the extra period, then Harden tied it at 132 on a pair of free throws with 33.5 seconds left.

"He just did what he does," Warriors coach Steve Kerr said. "He's the master of the isolation, the step-back 3 and drawing fouls."

Durant added 26 points and seven rebounds. Harden also had a triple-double Monday against Memphis of 43 points, 10 rebounds and 13 assists, but he was disappointed with nine turnovers he thought gave the Grizzlies too many transition opportunities.

Including his 50-point game Dec. 13 against the Lakers, Harden has scored at least 30 in 11 straight. Clint Capela contributed 29 points and 21 rebounds for Houston.

Kerr's simple message about defending Harden, who went to the line 27 times Monday: "Don't foul him!"

Harden shot five free throws in the first quarter Thursday and nine in all. His jumper with 5:37 left in regulation cut Golden State's lead to 112-111. He also got the Rockets close by knocking down two 3-pointers and assisting on another basket in the final 1:26 of the third as Houston cut its deficit to 98-92 going into the final quarter.

"We had a 20-point lead and lost. It doesn't really matter what happened at that point," Green said. Thompson scored 26 points and hit consecutive 3-pointers late in the first half. After struggling to find his stroke from deep, Thompson is 10 for 17 on 3-pointers the past three games.

With his first 3 at the 7-minute mark of the opening period, Durant became the 32nd player in NBA history to reach 22,000 points.

Falling backward as he released the ball over Harden, Durant swished a 3 with 59.2 seconds left in the first half.

The cold-shooting Rockets fell behind 70-53 at half-time. Houston was just 6 of 23 from long range, 3 for 9 by Harden, while the Warriors shot 62.8 percent.

"I don't think we played

with that killer instinct in the second half," Thompson said. "I think we relaxed up 17 points."

SPURS 125, RAPTORS 107
SAN ANTONIO (AP) — DeMar DeRozan had his first career triple-double with 21 points, 14 rebounds and 11 assists, and San Antonio welcomed back Kawhi Leonard with thunderous jeers in a victory over Toronto.

Leonard scored 21 points on 8-for-13 shooting, but the anger the Spurs' fans showered on him seemed to impact the MVP candidate. Leonard had to take a step back at the free throw line and compose himself amid chants of "Traitor! Traitor!" and "Quitter! Quitter!" from the capacity crowd that adored him during his seven seasons in San Antonio.

Leonard forced his way out of San Antonio in a trade that yielded DeRozan and Jakob Poeltl from Toronto for Leonard and Danny Green.

Leonard was booed heavily from the moment he walked onto the court for warmup. The boos continued during a pregame video tribute and player introductions, whenever he touched the ball and as he walked off the court following the lopsided loss.

DeRozan and the Spurs dominated the battle of former teammates, leading by as many as 28 points in snapping the Raptors' three-game winning streak. LaMarcus Aldridge scored 23 points for San Antonio, Bryn Forbes added 20, Derrick White 19 and Rudy Gay

13. NUGGETS 117, KINGS 113
SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — Jamal Murray scored 17 of his 36 points in the fourth quarter and Denver beat Sacramento for its fourth straight win.

Nikola Jokic had 26 points and 13 rebounds, and the Nuggets maintained their lead atop the Western Conference by winning for the eighth time in 10 games. Mason Plumlee added 12 points and 10 rebounds.

Buddy Hield had 29 points to lead the Kings, who have lost three straight. □

LeBron James out at least 1 more week with groin injury

LOS ANGELES (AP) — LeBron James will miss at least four more games with the Los Angeles Lakers while he recovers from a left groin strain.

The Lakers on Friday said James' injury will be re-evaluated in one week.

The four-time NBA MVP already has missed four games after getting hurt during the Lakers' victory at Golden State on Christmas. His recovery schedule will keep him out of the Lakers' upcoming two-game road trip and a home game against Detroit next week.

The Lakers are 1-3 without James in their lineup. They host the New York Knicks on Friday night.

James is averaging 27.3



Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James, left, shakes hands with coach Luke Walton as they have a chat during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Los Angeles Clippers on Friday, Dec. 28, 2018, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

points, 8.3 rebounds and 7.1 assists during his first season with the Lakers. □

Carey Price returns to Canadiens and shuts out Canucks

By The Associated Press
MONTREAL (AP) — Carey Price made 33 saves in his return from injury to help the Montreal Canadiens beat the Vancouver Canucks 2-0 on Thursday night. Price picked up his second shutout of the season and 42nd overall in his first appearance after missing three games because of a lower-body injury. Jordie Benn and Jonathan Drouin scored for Montreal. Canucks rookie Elias Pettersson left because of a lower-body injury in the second period. Named to the All-Star Games on Wednesday, Pettersson was injured after getting tangled with fellow rookie and Habs forward Jesperi Kotkaniemi. Pettersson's right knee was caught between Kotkaniemi's legs as they both fell to the ice. The Swede stayed down on the ice before getting to his feet and going to the dressing room. Benn opened the scoring with his third goal of the season at 11:50 of the first. Minutes after Pettersson's injury, Drouin burst up the wing for his 13th of the season.

LIGHTNING 6, KINGS 2
LOS ANGELES (AP) — Nikita Kucherov had a goal and three assists as Tampa Bay kept steamrolling along, beating Los Angeles for its seventh straight victory. The NHL-leading Lightning have earned at least one point in 16 consecutive games — the longest streak in the league this season. They are 15-0-1 during the run. Kucherov has eight goals and 19 assists during a 12-game point streak. He has scored in five straight games and has seven consecutive multipoint games. Steven Stamkos added a goal and two assists, and Brayden Point had a goal and an assist for Tampa Bay. Andrei Vasilevskiy made 28 saves for his sixth consecutive win. Austin Wagner and Drew

Doughty scored for the Kings, who have lost three of four. Jonathan Quick stopped 27 shots.

BLUES 5, CAPITALS 2

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Alex Ovechkin scored his 30th goal of the season, but St. Louis came back to beat Washington.

Ovechkin's first-period goal snapped a six-game drought and tied him with Mike Gartner as the only players in NHL history to begin their careers with 14 straight 30-goal seasons. Gartner scored 30 or more in his first 15 seasons.

Alex Pietrangelo had a goal and an assist for the Blues, Colton Parayko, Oskar Sundqvist, Robert Thomas and Tyler Bozak also scored, and Jake Allen made 23 saves.

Brett Connolly also scored for the Capitals.

WILD 4, MAPLE LEAFS 3

TORONTO (AP) — Zach Parise broke a tie off a turnover early in the third period and Minnesota rallied to beat Toronto.

Auston Matthews lost the puck to Parise, who beat goalie Michael Hutchinson high over his glove at 4:21 for his 18th goal of the season. Minnesota overcame deficits of 2-0 and 3-2.

Toronto got a power play midway through the period, with Matthews hitting the post short side on Devan Dubnyk. The Leafs pulled Hutchinson with 2:45 left, but were unable to get anything past the Wild netminder, including a chance that dribbled off the post in the dying seconds.

Jared Spurgeon had a goal and two assists, Charlie Coyle added a goal and an assist, and Mikko Koivu also scored for Minnesota. Dubnyk stopped 38 shots. Mitch Marner scored twice and William Nylander had the other goal for Toronto. John Tavares added two assists, and Hutchinson made 30 saves in his debut in an emergency recall from the minors.



Montreal Canadiens goaltender Carey Price makes a save against the Vancouver Canucks during the second period of an NHL hockey game Thursday, Jan. 3, 2019, in Montreal.

Associated Press

ISLANDERS 3, BLACKHAWKS 2, OT

UNIONDALE, N.Y. (AP) — Devon Toews scored his first NHL goal at 1:48 of overtime to lift New York past Chicago for its fifth straight victory.

Mathew Barzal scored twice to keep up his scoring binge and help the Islanders win for the eighth time in nine games. Robin Lehner, making his third straight start, stopped 19 shots as New York moved to 3-0-1 in four games at the Nassau Coliseum this season.

Toews, playing in the fifth game of his career, got the winner when he knocked in the rebound of his own shot that Collin Delia stopped, with the puck coming to him at the right side.

Patrick Kane and Dominik Kahun and scored for Chicago.

HURRICANES 5, FLYERS 3

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Dougie Hamilton, Justin Williams and Teuvo Teravainen scored second-period goals to lead Carolina past Philadelphia.

The Flyers fired coach Dave Hakstol and general manager Ron Hextall last month and the shake-up has yet

to spark any kind of sign of playoff life for a franchise that hasn't won a Stanley Cup since 1975. The Flyers lost their fifth straight game and fell to 3-5-1 under interim coach Scott Gordon. Wayne Simmons scored in the third to make it 4-1 and end Philly's scoreless streak that stretched more than 123 minutes. Sean Couturier and James van Riemsdyk also scored in the third for the Flyers.

Teravainen's second goal of the game ended the Flyers' comeback and secured Carolina's third win since Dec. 20. Warren Foegele also scores, and Petr Mrazek stopped 31 shots.

SABRES 4, PANTHERS 3

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Jeff Skinner scored twice and Buffalo ended a seven-game skid against Florida. Sam Reinhart had a goal and an assist, and Tage Thompson also scored in a game the Sabres played minus injured captain Jack Eichel. Buffalo coach Phil Housley said Eichel will miss at least one more game with an upper-body injury after he was hurt in the first period of a 3-1 loss to the

New York Islanders on Monday.

Linus Ullmark stopped 35 shots. Buffalo was 0-6-1 in its previous seven meetings against Florida, dating to a 4-2 win on March 27, 2017. More important, the Sabres snapped an 0-2-1 slide overall while improving to 5-7-4 since their 10-game winning streak, which matched a franchise record.

Alexander Barkov had a goal and an assist for Florida, and Mike Hoffman and Frank Vatrano also scored.

BRUINS 6, FLAMES 4

BOSTON (AP) — Jake DeBrusk and Brad Marchand each had two goals to lift Boston past Calgary.

Boston has won three in a row and six of eight. The Bruins built on their win over Chicago in Tuesday's Winter Classic by beating the top team in the Western Conference.

Jaroslav Halak stopped 33 shots, and John Moore and David Pastrnak also scored. Mike Smith had 21 saves for Calgary, which has dropped five of eight. Michael Frolik, Elias Lindholm, Johnny Gaudreau and Mikael Backlund scored. □

Clemson-Alabama IV has precedents in other sports



In this Jan. 10, 2016, file photo, Alabama head coach Nick Saban, left, and Clemson head coach Dabo Swinney pose for a picture during a news conference for the NCAA college football playoff championship game, in Glendale, Ariz. The Tigers are set to square off against the Crimson Tide for the fourth straight year in the College Football Playoff in Monday night's, Jan. 7, 2019, title game. While most of the players have changed since Alabama won the first meeting for the championship in January 2016, the coaches have remained the same. (AP Photo/Chris Carlson, File)

By JOSH DUBOW
AP Sports Writer
SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) — LeBron vs. Steph in the spring, Dabo vs. Nick in the winter. As much as Cleveland and Golden State became annual opponents in the NBA Finals before James left the Cavaliers last summer to join the Los Angeles Lakers after losing the title for the third time in four years to Curry and the Warriors, Clemson and Alabama have squared off in the winter to help determine college football's champion. The Tigers are set to square off against the Crimson Tide for the fourth straight year in the College Football Playoff in Monday night's title game. While most of the players have changed since Alabama won the first meeting for the championship in January 2016, the coaches have remained the same. Alabama's Nick Saban

won the championship the first year before Clemson's Dabo Sweeney got his first championship a year later. The Tide won in the semifinals last season and now the teams are set to meet again. "There are going to be a lot of similarities as far as the blueprint of the game plan because the head coaches are the same," said Mount Union coach Vince Kehres. If anyone knows what Alabama and Clemson are going through this week it would be the staffs that were at Mount Union and Wisconsin-Whitewater when they played for the Division III championship seven straight years from 2005-11. Kehres was defensive coordinator under his father, Larry, during that run when Mount Union won the first two meetings and three of the first four. Whitewater then took the next three titles before Mount Union

beat St. Thomas of Minnesota in 2012. The Raiders then resumed the rivalry with Whitewater the following year with the younger Kehres as head coach, but Whitewater won those two meetings as well. "You're certainly more prepared for the fact that you may play them based on the fact that you have played them so many times," Vince Kehres said. "As soon as you know it's a done deal that game plan is already kind of set. Then you're just tweaking as you get those tapes and you look at the most recent days." Here are some other noteworthy matchups that happened in four straight postseasons from around the sports world: **SIBLING RIVALRY:** While it doesn't quite count as postseason matchups, Venus and Serena Williams squared off for the title at four straight tennis majors starting with the 2002

French Open that Serena won in straight sets for her second career grand slam title. Serena followed that by beating her big sister in the final at Wimbledon, the U.S. Open and the 2003 Australian Open, winning the first of her two career Serena Slams. The sisters have met 30 times in all on the court, with Serena winning 18, including seven of nine meetings in slam finals. **GRIDIRON GREATS:** Few rivalries were as heated as the one between the Pittsburgh Steelers and Oakland Raiders in the 1970s. The games were physical, memorable and often impacted the championship. It got so intense that Pittsburgh coach Chuck Noll referred to Raiders safety George Atkinson as part of the "criminal element" in football, leading to an unsuccessful defamation suit. The teams played in five straight postseasons starting with the most memorable one in 1972 when Fran-

co Harris' 60-yard TD on the Immaculate Reception led the Steelers to a 13-7 win. The Raiders got revenge the following year before Pittsburgh beat Oakland in two straight AFC title games on the way to Super Bowl wins. The run ended with Oakland winning 24-7 in the 1976 AFC championship on the way to the Raiders' first Super Bowl win. **KINGS OF THE COURT:** There have been several NBA rivalries that featured four straight playoff meetings, including when Bill Russell's Celtics took three out of four Eastern Conference finals from Wilt Chamberlain and the 76ers from 1965-68. The Knicks and Bulls squared off each year from 1991-94 with Michael Jordan and Chicago taking the first three and Patrick Ewing and New York winning the fourth when Jordan was playing baseball. The Knicks went to the limit four straight times against Miami starting in 1997, with the Knicks winning three of the series that featured fights, suspensions and plenty of bad blood. The Lakers and Spurs then traded dominance in the Western Conference with four straight meetings in 2001-04 between teams featuring Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant in Los Angeles and Tim Duncan in San Antonio. **QUEENS OF THE COURT:** Connecticut and Notre Dame have been the dominant powers in women's college basketball this decade with the rivalry that began when both were in the Big East. The Irish won semifinal matchups in 2011 and '12 before Geno Auriemma and the Huskies got revenge with three straight wins from 2013-15. The last two came in the title game. **SOCCER POWERHOUSES:** Spanish soccer rivals Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid squared off for four straight years in the knockout stage of the Champions League. Ronaldo and Real Madrid won each time, including the finals in 2014 and '16, the quarterfinals in 2015 and the semifinals in 2017. □

Associated Press

CURLING

Continued from Page 17

"Our short term goals are continually to get better: Fundamentals, strategy, sweeping. We know if we master these little things, it will take us a long way."

A 12-year NFL veteran who spent most of his career with the Chiefs and Vikings, Allen was lamenting the end of his playing days when a friend dared him to try an Olympic sport. Allen toyed with the idea of badminton but rejected it as too taxing.

"We thought about curling. It was chill, and the winners have to buy the losers beer," he said. "We thought it was a win-win."

He rounded up former Rams quarterback Marc Bulger and Titans linebacker Keith Bullock and tackle Michael Roos to form a team; all were Pro Bowl selections during their NFL career, and living near Nashville, Tennessee.

Adopting the name All-Pro Curling Team, they started from scratch in March and kept their plans under wraps until they felt like they had made enough progress.

"We wanted the reaction when we got on the ice to be 'Oh, how long have you guys been doing this?'" Allen said in a telephone interview after practicing on

a converted hockey rink in Nashville. "We were serious. We didn't want it to seem like it was just some media hype, or just trying to stay relevant."

The first test was in November, when Allen and Bulger — with two "regular" curlers — competed in the Curl Mesabi Classic in Northern Minnesota. Their first opponent: The gold medal-winning team from Pyeongchang led by four-time Olympian John Shuster.

They lost 11-3, giving up five points in the sixth end.

"Honestly, they were a little better than I had expected," said Matt Hamilton, the second on that team. "All in all, Jared was technically pretty sound. But at the end of the day, I've seen thousands of curling shots and situations and that is ultimately going to win us more games."

Although curling matches are often conceded when they are out of reach, the Olympians kept playing through the eighth (of 10) ends, to help the football players gain the experience they'll need if they are going to be more competitive. (If it's any consolation for Allen's crew, Shuster's rink also scored a five-ender against Sweden in the gold-medal match.)

"We had one bad end, and



In this Jan. 3, 2019 photo, former Minnesota Vikings football player Jared Allen, second from left, stands with his three curling teammates, from left, Michael Roos, Keith Bullock and Marc Bulger after practice for a competition in Blaine, Minn.

Associated Press

we just kept playing with them. We just wanted to be a sponge," Bulger said. "The key was they knew we were taking it seriously. It wasn't just us saying 'We're going to take over curling,' kind of as a gimmick."

"We hope to play them again," he said, "when we're better."

The All-Pros are back at it at the USA Men's Challenge Round this weekend in Blaine, Minnesota, where they are competing for one of four remaining spots in next month's national championships. (Top teams like Shuster's have already qualified.)

They got off to a rough start in their first match, falling 10-1 to Steve Birklid's Seattle-based rink on Thursday night. But, by hopping into

the sport early in the Olympic cycle, they have almost three more years before the team for the 2022 Games is chosen.

Hamilton confessed he was put off at first about newcomers thinking they could reach the Olympics in a sport he'd worked a lifetime to master. But he also realized the publicity will be good for curling, which has struggled to break out of its niche as an every-four-years curiosity.

"If I really think I'm that good, I should be like 'Bring it on!'" Hamilton said in an email to The Associated Press from a competition in Japan. "How much they respected the game, though, is what made me realize they aren't making a mockery. We just have

some extremely athletic individuals who respect sport but have a need to compete in their blood. Can't disrespect that!"

All four football players agreed the reception they've received from lifetime curlers is decidedly different from a curler trying to break into the hyper-competitive NFL.

"Oh, he'd get smashed," Allen said. "We'd go out of our way to test his mettle, for sure."

Instead, they found the tight-knit but friendly community of curlers was eager to accept them. In their match against the Olympians, there was trash-talking — or banter, depending on whom you ask — and Hamilton even gave them some of his old curling gear. "I looked at their broom heads and I was disgusted. I was wondering why these former pro football players couldn't afford new broom heads," he said. "So I went into my curling bag and gave them some gently used ones before the game. That really surprised Jared, claiming nothing like that would ever fly in football." Like many of those who only experience curling every four years on TV, the football players saw the sweeping and the shouting and underestimated how hard it is. □

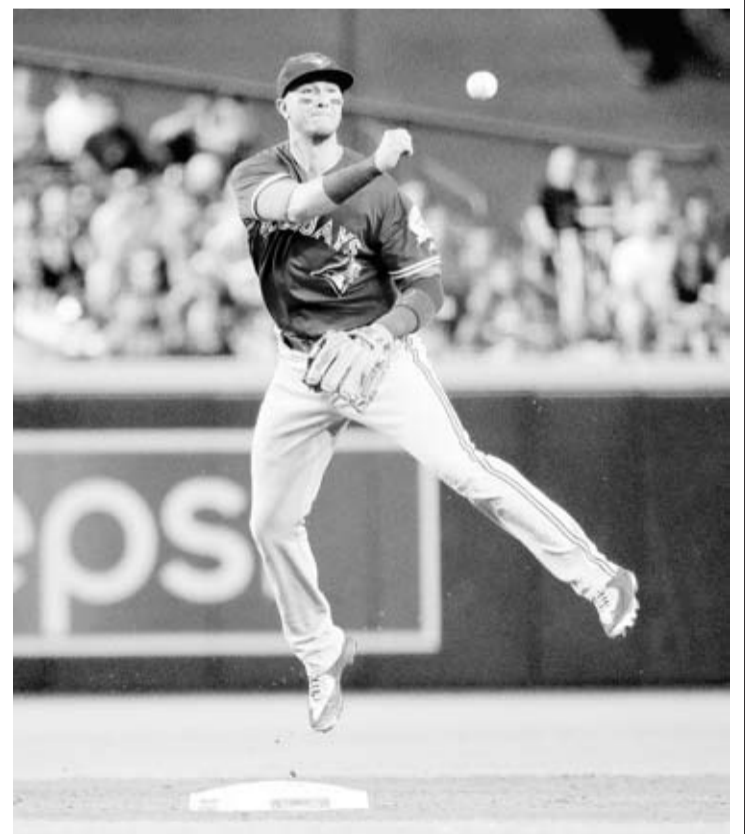
SS Troy Tulowitzki, Yankees finalize 1-year deal

NEW YORK (AP) — Troy Tulowitzki and the New York Yankees have finalized a one-year contract for the major league minimum \$555,000, giving the team a low-cost option at shortstop while Didi Gregorius recovers from Tommy John surgery.

Tulowitzki idolized retired Yankees captain Derek Jeter and has worn No. 2 in his honor. A five-time All-Star who turned 34 in October, Tulowitzki has not played in the major leagues since July 2017 and was released by the Toronto Blue Jays last month. He was limited to 66 games in 2017 because

of a hamstring and right ankle injury. The ankle required surgery last spring and he missed the entire season. Gregorius had right elbow surgery on Oct. 17 and is not expected to return until summer. New York also has been talking with Manny Machado, one of the top available free agents. Tulowitzki could slot in at shortstop, allowing Gleyber Torres to remain at second base and Miguel Andujar to stay at third. Tulowitzki was taken by Colorado with the seventh overall pick in the 2005 amateur draft, became a star with the Rockies, and agreed

after the 2010 season to a \$157.75 million, 10-year contract that added \$132 million over seven seasons. Colorado dealt him in July 2015 to Toronto in a deal that brought shortstop Jose Reyes to the Rockies. While Tulowitzki helped the Blue Jays reach that year's AL Championship Series, he slumped the next year and then was derailed by injuries. Tulowitzki is owed \$20 million for next year, \$14 million for 2020 and a \$4 million buyout of a 2021 team option. Toronto pays all but the big league minimum in the Yankees deal, which would be offset against his 2019 salary. □



In this July 20, 2016, file photo, Toronto Blue Jays' Troy Tulowitzki throws out Arizona Diamondbacks' Brandon Drury during the fourth inning of an interleague baseball game, in Phoenix.

Associated Press

Tech's big gadget show edges closer to gender equity

By BARBARA ORTUTAY
AP Technology Writer
NEW YORK (AP) — The world's largest tech conference has apparently learned a big lesson about gender equity.

CES, the huge annual consumer-electronics show in Las Vegas, caught major flak from activists in late 2017 when it unveiled an all-male lineup of keynote speakers for the second year in a row. Although it later added two female keynoters, the gathering's "boys' club" reputation remained intact. It didn't help that one of the unsanctioned events latching on to CES last year was a nightclub featuring female "robot strippers."

This year, four of the nine current keynoters are women. GenderAvenger, the activist group that raised a ruckus last year, recently sent CES organizers a congratulatory letter and awarded the show a "Gold Stamp of Approval" for a roster of keynote and "featured" speakers that it says is 45 percent women — 60 percent of them women of color.

It's a significant change for CES, which like most tech conferences remains disproportionately male, just like the industry it serves. Even absent the robot dogs, sci-fi worthy gadgets and "booth babes" CES has been known for, you could readily peg it as a technology show from the bath-



In this Jan. 4, 2017, photo a woman participates in a virtual realty presentation during an Intel news conference before CES International in Las Vegas.

room lines alone — where men shift uncomfortably as they wait their turn while women waltz right in. The four-day CES show opens Tuesday, though media previews begin Sunday. Keynoters this year include IBM CEO Ginni Rometty; Lisa Su, CEO of chipmaker Advanced Micro Devices; and U.S. Transportation Security Elaine Chao. The entire featured speaker list is currently half female, although the exact percentage won't be known until after the event. "There is no question we keep trying to

do better," said Gary Shapiro, CEO of the Consumer Technology Association, which organizes CES. "Diversity is about having people who see things differently — frankly, disagree with you and tell you that you are stupid," said Tania Yuki, CEO of social media analytics company Shareable and an attendee of CES for the past several years. The big question, she says, is whether CES has really listened to its critics. CES is the place to be for tech companies and startups to show off their lat-

est gadgets and features. More than 180,000 people are expected to attend this year, and some 4,500 companies will be on the convention floor. Among them are newcomers like Tide maker Procter & Gamble, defense contractor Raytheon and tractor seller John Deere — all eager to burnish their technology bona fides.

But really leveling the playing field often means more than inviting female CEOs to speak. For starters, women and people of color are underrepresented in the tech industry, especially in leadership and technical roles. So, conference organizers might need to look harder, or be more flexible in who they invite to speak. There are also optics. While recent attendees say "booth babes" — scantily clad women hawking gadgets — no longer seem to be a presence, some companies still hire "fitness models," largely young women wearing tight-fitting outfits, to demo products. This can make it difficult for the few women at the show who are there as executives, engineers and other technologists, as men mistake them for models, too.

"When you are talking

about scantily clad models you are setting a tone," said Bobbie Carlton, the founder of Innovation Women, a speaker bureau for women. "It is a slippery slope and you end up with this type of mentality that runs through industry, where women are objectified and are only useful if they look good." More optics: Until recently, a porn convention taking place immediately after CES appeared more diverse than CES itself. Not a good look for the tech con-fab.

There are also logistical challenges, Carlton said. For example, women often work for smaller companies, which can find it more challenging to "send someone cross-country to stay at a fancy hotel for three days," she said.

Rajia Abdelaziz is CEO of Invisawear, a startup that makes smart "safety jewelry." While she's attending CES this year, she said it wasn't worth the \$10,000 it would cost her company to have its own convention-floor booth. In addition to the cost concerns, Abdelaziz notes that her products are primarily aimed at women — and there just aren't that many of them at CES. Women are also still more likely to be responsible for the home and for child care, so they might turn down speaking opportunities if the timing doesn't work for them, Carlton said. CES has tried to make some concessions. For example, it offers private pods for women to pump breast milk at the event. But it doesn't offer child care support, unlike the smaller Grace Hopper Celebration for Women in Computing conference, a fall event aimed at women in computer science.

Organizers note that children are not permitted at CES. Although kids are also banned from Grace Hopper, that conference still manages to offer free child care for attendees.

Still, Yuki is hopeful that CES is on the right track. "It's a big conference," she said. "You can only turn a very big ship very slowly." □

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Minimum wage rising in 20 states and numerous cities

By DAVID A. LIEB

Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP)

— At Granny Shaffer's restaurant in Joplin, Missouri, owner Mike Wiggins is reprinting the menus to reflect the 5, 10 or 20 cents added to each item.

A two-egg breakfast will cost an extra dime, at \$7.39. The price of a three-piece fried chicken dinner will go up 20 cents, to \$8.78. The reason: Missouri's minimum wage is rising.

Wiggins said the price hikes are necessary to help offset an estimated \$10,000 to \$12,000 in additional annual pay to his staff as a result of a new minimum wage law taking effect Tuesday.

"For us it's very simple. There's no big pot of money out there to get the money out of" for the required pay raises, Wiggins said.

New minimum wage requirements will take effect in 20 states and nearly two dozen cities around the start of the new year, affecting millions of workers. The state wage hikes range from an extra nickel per hour in Alaska to a \$1-an-hour bump in Maine, Massachusetts and for California employers with more than 25 workers.

Seattle's largest employers will have to pay workers at least \$16 an hour starting Tuesday. In New York City, many businesses will have



In this Tuesday, Dec. 18, 2018 photo, Shawna Green, waitress at Granny Shaffer's, puts out menus for customers at the restaurant in Joplin, Mo.

Associated Press

to pay at least \$15 an hour as of Monday. That's more than twice the federal minimum of \$7.25 an hour.

A variety of other new state laws also take effect Tuesday. Those include revisions to sexual harassment policies stemming from the #MeToo movement, restrictions on gun sales following deadly mass shootings and revamped criminal penalties as officials readjust the balance between punishment and rehabilitation.

The state and local wage laws come amid a multi-year push by unions and liberal advocacy groups to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour nationwide. Few are there yet, but

many states have ratcheted up wages through phased-in laws and adjustments for inflation.

In Arkansas and Missouri, voters this fall approved ballot initiatives raising the minimum wage after state legislators did not. In Missouri, the minimum wage will rise from \$7.85 to \$8.60 an hour on Tuesday as the first of five annual increases that will take it to \$12 an hour by 2023.

At Granny Shaffer's in Joplin, waitress Shawna Green will see her base pay go up. But she has mixed emotions about it.

"We'll have regulars, and they will notice, and they will bring it to our attention,

like it's our fault and our doings" that menu prices are increasing, she said. "They'll back off on something, and it's usually their tips, or they don't come as often." Economic studies on minimum wage increases have shown that some workers do benefit, while others might see their work hours reduced. Businesses may place a higher value on experienced workers, making it more challenging for entry-level employees to find jobs.

Seattle, the fastest-growing large city in the U.S., has been at the forefront of the movement for higher minimum wages. A local ordinance raised the minimum

wage to as much as \$11 an hour in 2015, then as much as \$13 in 2016, depending on the size of the employer and whether it provided health insurance.

A series of studies by the University of Washington has produced evolving conclusions.

In May, the researchers determined that Seattle's initial increase to \$11 an hour had an insignificant effect on employment but that the hike to \$13 an hour resulted in "a large drop in employment." They said the higher minimum wage led to a 6.9 percent decline in the hours worked for those earning under \$19 an hour, resulting in a net reduction in paychecks.

In October, however, those same researchers reached a contrasting conclusion. They said Seattle workers employed at low wages experienced a modest reduction in hours worked after the minimum wage increased, but nonetheless saw a net increase in average pretax earnings of \$10 a week. That gain generally went to those who already had been working more hours while those who had been working less saw no significant change in their overall earnings.

Both supporters and opponents of higher minimum wages have pointed to the Seattle studies. □

Ford recalls over 953,000 vehicles to replace inflators

By The Associated Press

Ford is recalling more than 953,000 vehicles worldwide to replace Takata passenger air bag inflators that can explode and hurl shrapnel.

The move includes 782,000 vehicles in the U.S. and is part of the largest series of recalls in U.S. history.

Included are the 2010 Ford Edge and Lincoln MKX, the 2010 and 2011 Ford Ranger, the 2010 to 2012 Ford Fusion and Lincoln MKZ, the 2010 and 2011 Mercury Milan, and the 2010 to 2014 Ford Mustang.

Some of the recalls may be limited to specific geo-

graphic areas of the U.S.

At least 23 people have been killed worldwide by the inflators.

Ford says it doesn't know of any injuries in vehicles included in this recall. Dealers will replace the inflators. Takata uses the chemical ammonium nitrate to create an explosion to inflate air bags.

But it can deteriorate over time due to heat and humidity and explode with too much force, blowing apart a metal canister designed to contain the explosion.

Takata recalls are being phased in through 2020. □



This Nov. 19, 2015 file photo shows the blue Ford oval badge in the grill of a pickup truck on the sales lot at Butler County Ford in Butler, Pa.

Associated Press

Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

						8		
	8				3		9	
6	2		4			7		
	9		8					
		4				1		
					2		4	
	7		1		3			6
	2		7				8	
		5						

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 1/05

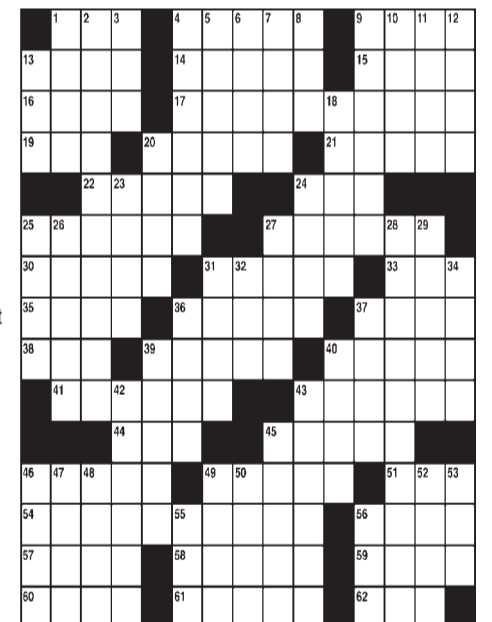
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

3	6	7	5	2	9	8	1	4
9	8	1	6	3	4	5	2	7
2	5	4	8	1	7	9	3	6
4	1	5	7	6	8	3	9	2
6	3	2	4	9	1	7	8	5
8	7	9	2	5	3	6	4	1
7	9	3	1	4	5	2	6	8
1	2	8	9	7	6	4	5	3
5	4	6	3	8	2	1	7	9

ACROSS

- 1 "Cat ___ your tongue?"
- 4 Island greeting
- 9 "True ___", John Wayne movie
- 13 Sheltered bay
- 14 Barry & Annable
- 15 TV's "What's My ___?"
- 16 Watched
- 17 Ignores one's budget
- 19 In one ___ and out the other
- 20 Tarkenton & Drescher
- 21 Griffith & Warhol
- 22 Whittles
- 24 Baseball score
- 25 Planned tricks
- 27 Head honchos
- 30 Rattled
- 31 Wonderland visitor
- 33 Run ___ tab; add to one's bar bill
- 35 Not as much
- 36 Squeaky floorboard's noise
- 37 Skin mark
- 38 "You ___ what you eat"
- 39 Treaties
- 40 Banquet
- 41 Valuables
- 43 Kingdoms
- 44 Faux ___; social blunder
- 45 Emotional
- 46 Sir ___ Newton
- 49 Clip wool
- 51 Fraternity letter
- 54 ___ with; write to
- 56 Betelgeuse or Polaris
- 57 Shade trees
- 58 Dishwasher cycle
- 59 Enormous
- 60 Amount to swallow
- 61 Look of contempt
- 62 Suffix for host or heir



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 1/5/19

Friday's Puzzle Solved

E	W	E	S	A	B	E	S	C	L	A	D
V	A	L	I	D	M	A	L	E	H	O	B
E	L	A	T	E	A	R	M	A	D	I	L
S	T	S	M	R	S	S	E	L	L	E	R
T	H	A	I	S	H	A	L				
F	R	I	E	N	D	P	O	L	Y	P	S
L	A	C	E	D	S	H	I	R	T	R	A
A	V	I	D	S	U	I	T	E	B	E	T
N	E	T	E	N	E	M	Y	P	E	C	A
L	Y	N	X	E	S	P	A	R	E	N	T
A	P	E	S	O	U	N	D				
C	L	E	V	E	R	T	I	P	E	B	B
A	U	X	I	L	I	A	R	Y	E	R	N
B	R	I	E	N	A	I	L	R	O	C	K
S	E	T	S	G	A	M	E	B	E	E	S

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DOWN

- 1 Spanish romantic artist
- 2 Raised highways
- 3 Senator Cruz
- 4 Venerates
- 5 Volcano outputs
- 6 Kiln
- 7 His and ___; matching items for Dad & Mom
- 8 Burro
- 9 Ford & Close
- 10 Orange peel
- 11 ___ 500; annual race
- 12 Actress Harper
- 13 Mediocre mark
- 18 DVD remote button
- 20 Worry
- 23 Wood splitters
- 24 Roll's partner, in phrase
- 25 Wahine's dance
- 26 Met production
- 27 Unfair slant
- 28 Fast-growing evergreen
- 29 Sudden muscle contraction
- 31 Rainbows
- 32 Permit
- 34 ___ and crafts

- 46 Like eclairs
- 47 Song for one
- 48 Up in ___; irate
- 49 Whirl
- 50 Sharpen
- 52 Hangs limply
- 53 Rage
- 55 Fathers of Jrs.
- 56 That woman

Classifieds

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CRUISES

January 5	Albatros
January 6	Celebrity Silhouette

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Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.
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China lands spacecraft on 'dark' side of moon in world first

By KEN MORITSUGU

Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China's burgeoning space program achieved a first on Thursday: a landing on the so-called dark side of the moon that brings the country closer to its goal of becoming a space power.

Three nations — the United States, the former Soviet Union and more recently China — have sent spacecraft to the near side of the moon, which faces Earth, but this landing is the first-ever on the far side.

The China National Space Administration said the 10:26 a.m. touchdown of the Chang'e 4 craft has "opened up a new chapter in human lunar exploration."

A photo taken at 11:40 a.m. and sent back by Chang'e 4 shows a small crater and a barren surface that appears to be illuminated by a light from the lunar explorer. Its name comes from that of a Chinese goddess who, according to legend, has lived on the moon for millennia.

The landing highlights China's growing ambitions to rival the U.S., Russia and Europe in space, and more



In this photo provided on Jan. 3, 2019, by the China National Space Administration via Xinhua News Agency, an image taken by China's Chang'e-4 probe after its landing.

Associated Press

broadly, to cement the nation's position as a regional and global power.

"The space dream is part of the dream to make China stronger," President Xi Jinping said in 2013, shortly after becoming China's leader.

In year-end wrap-ups, Chinese media and officials hailed the Dec. 8 launch

of Chang'e 4 as one of the nation's major achievements in 2018. The landing on Thursday was announced to the public by state broadcaster CCTV at the top of the noon news.

"On the whole, China's space technology still lags behind the West, but with the landing on the far side of the moon, we have

raced to the front," said Hou Xiyun, a professor at Nanjing University's school of astronomy and space science.

He added that China has Mars, Jupiter and asteroids in its sights: "There's no doubt that our nation will go farther and farther."

In 2013, Chang'e 3, the predecessor craft to the current mission, made the first moon landing since the former Soviet Union's Luna 24 in 1976. The United States is the only country that has successfully sent a person to the moon, though China is considering a crewed mission too.

For now, it plans to send a Chang'e 5 probe to the moon next year and have it return to Earth with samples — also not done since the Soviet mission in 1976.

The moon's far side isn't always dark but is sometimes called the dark side because it faces away from Earth and is relatively unknown. It has a different composition than the near side, where previous missions have landed.

Chang'e 4, a combined lander and rover, will make astronomical observations and probe the structure

and mineral composition of the terrain above and below the surface. "The far side of the moon is a rare quiet place that is free from interference from radio signals from Earth," mission spokesman Yu Guobin said, according to the official Xinhua News Agency. "This probe can fill the gap of low-frequency observation in radio astronomy and will provide important information for studying the origin of stars and nebula evolution." One challenge of operating on the far side of the moon is communicating with Earth. China launched a relay satellite in May so that Chang'e 4 can send back information.

China conducted its first crewed space mission in 2003, becoming only the third country to do so after Russia and the U.S. It has put a pair of space stations into orbit and plans to launch a Mars rover in the mid-2020s. Its space program suffered a rare setback last year with the failed launch of its Long March 5 rocket.

Wu Weiren, the chief designer of the China Lunar Exploration Project, called the landing a trailblazing milestone. □

Side of the moon you can't see 'is not dark, it's just far'

By SETH BORENSTEIN

WASHINGTON (AP) — Despite the name of Pink Floyd's best-selling album, the side of the moon you can't see isn't always dark. But it is far.

So scientists call the area where a Chinese spacecraft just landed the far side, not the dark side.

"The other side sees the sun sometimes. The other side

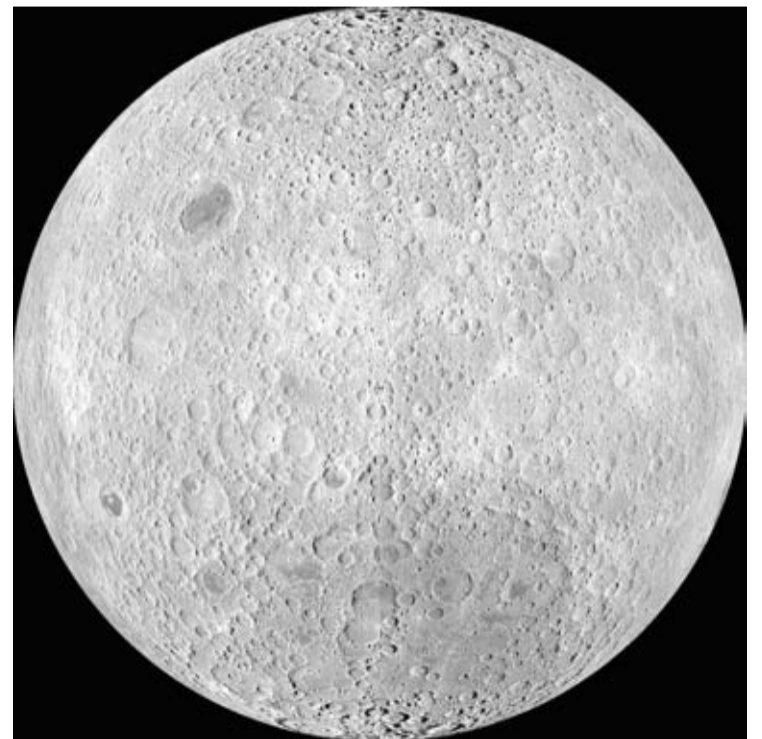
is not dark, it's just far," said Harvard astronomer Avi Loeb. "It's a mistake."

The moon is what scientists call "tidally locked" which means the same side always faces us, while another side always faces away, Loeb said. When Earth views a darkened new moon, the far side is lit. When there's a full moon in our sky, the far side is dark.

Every semester, Purdue University lunar and planetary scientist Jay Melosh demonstrates how the far side gets light using a bright light as the sun and students playing the roles of the moon and the Earth. But students still get it wrong on the midterm, calling it the dark side.

Melosh traces the myth back to a Walt Disney television special in 1955 that talked about it always being dark on the other side of the moon and futuristic astronauts dropping flares. The term dark side really took off in 1973 with the Pink Floyd's mesmerizing album "The Dark Side of the Moon."

While China is the first to land a spacecraft on the



This composite image made available by NASA in 2011 shows the far side of Earth's moon.

Associated Press

far side, there have been plenty of detailed photographs taken by orbiting spacecraft. The first grainy pictures came from a for-

mer Soviet Union craft in 1959. NASA's Apollo 8 astronauts saw it first when they orbited the moon 50 years ago. □

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Opera based on Sarah Kane's last play gets US premiere

By MIKE SILVERMAN

NEW YORK (AP) — Depression, rage, suicide: These are the dark ingredients of the last play written by Sarah Kane before she killed herself at age 28. Now an operatic version, as dazzling as it is disturbing, is having its U.S. premiere.

"4.48 Psychosis," composed by Philip Venables and adapted from the play of the same title, premiered to critical and popular acclaim in London and will be performed here at the annual Prototype festival dedicated to promoting new work.

"I was immediately taken with the piece," said Beth Morrison, one of the directors of Prototype. "Is it depressing? Of course it is. It's sobering, difficult. ... But we look to works like this to express the human condition, and the things that we suffer with as humans and as a society."

Kane burst onto the scene in 1995 with her first play, "Blasted," which shocked audiences because of its



This photo provided by Royal Opera House shows Mezzo Lucy Schauffer and soprano Gweneth-Ann Rand in a scene from the London production of Philip Venables' opera "4.48 Psychosis."

Associated Press

explicit sex and violence. "4.48 Psychosis" premiered in 2000, a year after Kane hanged herself. The play's title seems to refer to the precise minute when the troubled playwright would spontaneously awaken

and have a period of lucidity before needing her next dose of medication at 6 a.m.

The play's structure is unique: no list of characters, no indication who speaks which lines, no clear

narrative, barely any stage directions. For Venables, that provided enormous challenges but also a welcome freedom.

"It has this huge range of different text modes," he said in an interview this week at

the Baruch Performing Arts Center, where the opera opens Saturday for six performances. "So it's not just monologue or dialogue. Some of it isn't even verbal text. It's doctors' notes, or a list of numbers, not necessarily to be spoken.

"You can divide it how you like, which gives you amazing flexibility musically," he said.

He chose to write it for six female singers, two of whom sometimes take on the roles of patient and therapist. "The text clearly has a polyphony of voices, like opposing voices in your head," Venables said. "I wanted to render that into real musical polyphony. That's why I chose to have six voices onstage."

The orchestral score calls for saxophones, violas, an accordion, bass, flute and piccolo. There are also what Venables calls "bits and bobs" of percussion instruments — including a wood saw. Plus pre-recorded sounds of static and "elevator music." □

Bob Einstein of Super Dave and "Curb" fame dies at 76

By LYNN ELBER

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Bob Einstein, the veteran comedy writer and performer known for "The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour," "Curb Your Enthusiasm" and his spoof daredevil character Super Dave Osborne, has died, according to his brother, filmmaker Albert Brooks. Einstein was 76. Einstein will be "missed forever," Brooks said in a post Wednesday on his verified Twitter account.

"R.I.P. My dear brother Bob Einstein. A great brother, father and husband. A brilliantly funny man," tweeted Brooks, 71.

Details of Einstein's death were not immediately available. Representatives for him and Brooks did not immediately respond to calls or emails.

Einstein was scheduled to be part of the 10th season of "Curb Your Enthusiasm," but his health barred him from filming, HBO said.

On the comedy, Einstein played annoying pal Marty Funkhouser to Larry David's equally difficult character. In a statement, David said he'd never seen an actor enjoy a role more than Einstein did playing Marty.

"It was an amazing, unforgettable experience knowing and working with him. There was no one like him, as he told us again and again," David said Wednesday. "We're all in a state of shock."

Einstein created and played Super Dave, a stuntman who was far more ambitious than he was agile and looked the part in an eye-catching white jumpsuit. Super Dave appeared on comedy-variety specials and series, most recently "Super Dave's Spike Tacular" in 2009.

"This character allows me to do anything I want, comedically, and get away with it," the comedian told The Associated Press in 1995,

when he was starring in the series "Super Dave's Las Vegas Spectacular" series. Einstein recounted Super Dave's origins on a 1970s variety show.

"I came up with the idea of a daredevil who's going to go upside down, in a metal car, at 90 mph, and it's never been done before," Einstein said then. "I get into this metal car, I'm strapped in. You pull back, and it's a roller coaster at Magic Mountain, with kids and nuns and everything else!

"I pass out while everybody else is having a wonderful time," he said.

Over time, Super Dave even made it into commercials for clothes and athletic shoes. Einstein said he never tired of his alter ego. Einstein was born in 1942 in Los Angeles to actress Thelma Leeds and comedian and actor Harry Einstein, also known as Harry Parke. He gained radio fame as the character Nick Parkya-



In this June 27, 2018 file photo, Bob Einstein arrives at the Los Angeles premiere of "Robin Williams: Come Inside My Mind" at the TCL Chinese Theatre.

Associated Press

karkus and later played him on the big screen.

Besides Albert Brooks (his stage name), Bob Einstein's siblings include Clifford Einstein.

Bob Einstein won an Emmy for writing on the 1960s series "The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour," on which he also played opposite Tom and Dick Smothers,

and a second Emmy in 1976 for Dick Van Dyke's "Van Dyke and Company" variety series.

Comedian David Steinberg recalled on Twitter that he and Einstein started out together on the Smothers' show.

"What a mind! What a great friend. Brilliantly funny always," Steinberg posted. □

'Escape Room' is high-concept and not half bad

By **LINDSEY BAHR**
Associated Press

In retrospect, it's actually kind of surprising that there hasn't been an escape room-themed horror movie until now. The popular interactive mystery games are kind of mini films. There's a built-in set, stakes, opportunities for conflict and teamwork and a logical start and finish. It's certainly a more obvious fit for a movie than a board game or theme park ride.

So, from the imaginations of "Fast & Furious" producer Neal H. Moritz and "Insidious: The Last Key" director Adam Robitel comes "Escape Room," where the characters are as random as an audience-chosen improv group (Investment banker! Soldier! Miner! Smart teen! Grocer!), the rooms look like discarded Nine Inch Nails music video sets (not exactly a criticism), the stakes are \$10,000 or death, which seem far too low and too high, and everyone agrees that Petula Clark's "Downtown" is a bad song (which is both incorrect and a strange, rude hill



This image released by Sony Pictures shows Taylor Russell in "Escape Room."

Associated Press

to die on). As if the film is concerned that the audience will lose interest immediately, "Escape Room" starts at the end, as a lone man, Ben (Logan Miller), desperately tries to figure out the clues in a room that is quickly closing in on itself, "Star Wars" trash-compactor-style. It's certainly a jolt of energy up front, but right as things are

looking really bleak for Ben, it cuts to "three days earlier." It's cheap and a little insulting to have to reassure the audience that there is some exciting and harrowing stuff to come as long as they get through all the boring introductory stuff. At least it doesn't resort to the old record-scratch, freeze-frame, "you're probably wondering how I got here"

standby. The thing is, "Escape Room" isn't actually all that bad, just kind of silly, but it takes a moment to readjust your expectations after that condescending beginning, and a very phoned-in introduction to the unlucky six Chicago strangers who all receive a mysterious box and decide, what the heck, let's check out this

escape room. There's the skittish but brilliant college student Zoey (Taylor Russell), the ruthless finance guy Jason (Jay Ellis), the veteran who hates heat, Amanda (Deborah Ann Woll), the regular joe, Mike (Tyler Labine) and the escape room obsessive who honestly never does all that much to help, Danny (Nik Dodani).

Curiously no one seems all that concerned about the odd premise that this team activity could have a single winner at all, or perhaps they think they'll all win \$10,000. I guess it becomes clearer when people start dying in the rooms.

And, boy, are they put through the wringer. The have to brave extreme heat, extreme cold, poison, drugs, rising tensions and body counts while trying to figure out how to get out of each puzzle room, a few of which are pretty interesting. It's like a "Final Destination" spinoff where each character's past trauma haunts them. Mercifully, all the carnage is kept to tolerable PG-13 levels. □

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Sandra Oh, Andy Samberg want lighter tone at Golden Globes



Sandra Oh, left, and Andy Samberg pose for a photo on the red carpet at the 76th Annual Golden Globe Awards Preview Day at The Beverly Hilton on Thursday, Jan. 3, 2019, in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Associated Press

By **JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr.**
Associated Press
LOS ANGELES (AP) — Actress Sandra Oh wants to bring a lighter tone to the Golden Globes after last year's awards show took

a much more serious approach centered on the #MeToo movement. Oh said Thursday that she and fellow host Andy Samberg will provide a "moment of joy" at the 76th an-

nual Golden Globe Awards in Beverly Hills on Sunday night. She and Samberg were first paired as award presenters during a comical set at the Emmys last year when Oh ripped up the winner's envelope, referencing the 2017 Oscars "La La Land" slip-up before the duo pieced together the card and announced the actual winner.

"I know when Andy and I were talking about the feeling that I really want to bring, and really focus on, is just to have a moment of joy," said Oh, who is favored to win a Golden Globe award for best actress for her "Killing Eve" role. "Honestly, with who is going to be in that audience, the nominees this year, it excites me so tremendously ... mostly because of the diversity in that room." □

DJ Art Laboe, 93, spins oldies to link inmates and family

By RUSSELL CONTRERAS

Associated Press

PALM SPRINGS, Calif. (AP)

— It's approaching 9 p.m. and Art Laboe adjusts the microphone as Sister Sledge's "We Are Family" ends.

"And now it's time for you to call up for those goodnight dedications," Laboe announces.

"Hello?" a young girl says. "I want to dedicate this to my dad that's in Lancaster (prison) and I miss tonight ... I just want to say, Dad, I love you no matter where you go..." She dissolves into tears.

The 93-year-old DJ based in Palm Springs, California, credits one group of listeners for keeping him on the air after 75 years: family members who want to send messages to loved ones in prison.

Every Sunday on his syndicated show "The Art Laboe Connection Show," his baritone voice calls on family members to speak directly to inmates in California, Arizona or Nevada. Sometimes, Laboe reads parts of letters written by inmates. It's a role Laboe says he feels honored to play.

"I don't judge," Laboe said



In this Oct. 9, 2018 photo, DJ Art Laboe sits in his Palm Springs, Calif. studio and talks about his 75 years in the radio business.

Associated Press

in an interview with The Associated Press at his Palm Springs studio. "I like people."

He often tells a story about a woman who came by the studio so her toddler could tell her father, who was serving time for a violent crime, "Daddy, I love you."

"It was the first time he had

heard his baby's voice," Laboe said. "And this tough, hard-nosed guy burst into tears."

Born Arthur Egoian in Salt Lake City to an Armenian-American family, Laboe grew up during the Great Depression in a Mormon household run by a single mom. His sister sent him his first radio when he was 8

years old. The voices and stories that came from it enveloped him.

"And I haven't let go since," Laboe said.

He moved to California, attended Stanford University and served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Eventually, he landed a job as a radio announcer at KSAN in San Francisco and ad-

opted the name Art Laboe after a boss suggested he take the last name of a secretary to sound more American. But it was when Laboe worked as a DJ for KXLA in Los Angeles where he gained fame. Laboe was one of the first DJs to play R&B and rock 'n' roll in California and is credited by scholars for helping integrate dance halls among Latinos, blacks, Asian Americans and whites who were drawn to his multicultural musical line up.

By 1956, Laboe's afternoon show became the city's top radio program.

Over the decades, Laboe maintained a fan base, especially among Mexican-Americans who followed him from station to station. He started getting calls from inmates' family members in the 1990s on his syndicated oldies show. Current and former gang members were some of his most loyal fans.

"Here is someone who gave a voice to the most humble of us all through music," said Lalo Alcaraz, a syndicated cartoonist and television writer who grew up listening to Laboe in San Diego. □

Kevin Hart says he's considering Oscar hosting gig again

By DAVID BAUDER

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Prodded by Ellen DeGeneres, comic Kevin Hart says he'll reconsider his decision to step down as host of the Academy Awards.

Hart had backed away two days after being named host last month when some homophobic tweets he had made a decade ago resurfaced. But DeGeneres urged him to host the show during an interview that aired Friday on her talk show.

The motion picture Academy has not named a replacement host for its Feb. 24 awards show.

"You have grown," DeGeneres told him. "You have apologized. You're apologizing again right now. You've done it. Don't let



In this Aug. 3, 2017 file photo, Kevin Hart poses at Kevin Hart's "Laugh Out Loud" new streaming video network launch event at the Goldstein Residence in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Associated Press

these people win. Host the Oscars."

She applied subtle pressure by saying after one commercial break, "We're back with this year's Oscars host, Kevin Hart."

Hart told her that "you have put a lot of things on my mind" and that he would think about their conversation.

If there's a campaign to get him back, it couldn't have

started more slickly: on the hugely successful talk show run by one of Hollywood's most prominent gay celebrities, who hosted the Oscars herself in 2007.

DeGeneres said she called the Academy this week to urge that Hart be brought back, and was told that officials would be "thrilled" if he did. An Academy representative did not immediately return a message for comment.

Hart told her that when his old messages resurfaced, "what was once the brightest light ever just got real dark." He initially said he wouldn't apologize because he had addressed the issue several times. But given an ultimatum to apologize, he did so and stepped down.

Hart said it was hard for him

because he considered it an attack when his tweets resurfaced a day after he got the Oscars gig.

"That's an attempt to end me," he said. "That's not an attack to just stop the Oscars ... Somebody has to take a stand against the ... trolls."

DeGeneres received some resistance on social media, with some commenters saying that Hart's homophobic jokes were a legitimate issue for discussion, and it wasn't a case of people maliciously trying to hurt him. She responded on Twitter: "I believe in forgiveness. I believe in second chances." The Oscars are looking for something to juice Hollywood's biggest night, after the ceremony drew its smallest audience ever in 2018. □

In India, a trio of unlikely heroes wages war on plastic

By RISHABH R. JAIN

NEW DELHI (AP) — For more than 25 years, Ram Nath has lived on the banks of the Yamuna River under a 19th-century iron bridge. Each morning, the wiry man walks a few steps from his makeshift hut and enters the black, sludgy waters of one of India's most polluted rivers. He is fishing for trash.

"This is the only work we have," said the 40-year-old, sorting through a pile of plastic bottles, bags, and cast-off electronics.

Hundreds of garbage collectors live on the Yamuna's banks in New Delhi, making \$2 to \$4 per day recycling plastic waste collected from the river. While Nath doesn't think of himself as an environmentalist, he is one of a handful of New Delhi residents waging war against the tsunami of plastic threatening to swamp India. They include a 9th-grade student who convinces posh restaurants to give up plastic straws and a businessman whose company makes plates and bowls from palm leaves.

India, which hosts U.N. World Environment Day on June 5, can use all the help it can get. This year's theme is "Beat Plastic Pollution."

With more than 15 million people, New Delhi and its surrounding cities produce an estimated 17,000 tons of trash daily, according to Indian officials and environmentalists. That requires immense dumps, hills of stinking trash that measure up to 50 meters tall. Last year, two people were killed



In this photo taken May 28, 2018, Ram Nath, 40, sorts reusable trash he fished out from Yamuna, India's sacred river that flows through the capital of New Delhi.

Associated Press

when a large part of one of the city's dumps crashed down onto them.

"All these products which we use because of convenience take many hundreds of years" to even partially decompose, said Chitra Mukherjee, an environmental expert and head of operations at Chintan.

Mukherjee, who has spent

years raising awareness and creating localized efforts to curb plastic pollution credits the Bharatiya Janata Party-led government for making waste management and pollution a more serious issue.

"It is a collaborative effort between not only bureaucrats, but researchers, environmentalists who have been brought on board to make some progressive policies," she said.

But policy and impact can mean different things. Like the repeated bans in New Delhi on using thin plastic bags. The latest regulation came with a hefty \$75 fine. Yet a trip to nearly any shop in New Delhi makes clear how widely the ban is flouted.

Amardeep Bardhan believes he can make a difference.

His company, Prakritii, makes plates and bowls from the leaves of south India's areca palm trees. The plateware, which has the

feel of thick paper plates, biodegrades in seven to ten days, he said. The company doesn't harvest any palm trees, but waits for leaves to fall to the ground. "In this entire process, we are not harming the environment," said Bardhan. "We are generating something from the waste, people are loving it, and then it

goes back as a waste."

While Prakritii initially made most of its income from exports to Europe and the U.S., Bardhan said the market for eco-friendly products is growing in India, especially among younger people who value quality over price. His company generates more than \$150,000 in revenue each year.

In places, the trend is growing.

Some fancy restaurants in and around New Delhi are doing away with plastic straws and replacing them with paper straws. That's largely because of Aditya Mukarji, a student who launched his campaign after seeing a video of two veterinarians trying to remove a plastic straw from a turtle's nose.

"People listen more to children bringing up environmental concerns," said Mukarji, who has helped replace more than 500,000 plastic straws at restaurants and hotels since he started his campaign in March.

If nothing else, India hosting the World Environment Day has made environmental protection a hot topic — at least briefly — in a country where trash is everywhere. Tuesday will see numerous official environmental gatherings across India, clean up campaigns along the Yamuna and mall food courts agreeing to forgo plastic plateware for one day.

The hope is that everything doesn't go back to normal on Wednesday. □



In this photo taken June 1, 2018, a family of trash collectors sort reusable trash which they collected from a garbage dump in New Delhi, India.

Associated Press



In this photo taken May 28, 2018, Vaibhav Jaiswal, co-founder of Prakritii, or nature, a company that manufactures eco-friendly dinnerware, inspects his products in his warehouse in New Delhi, India.

Associated Press